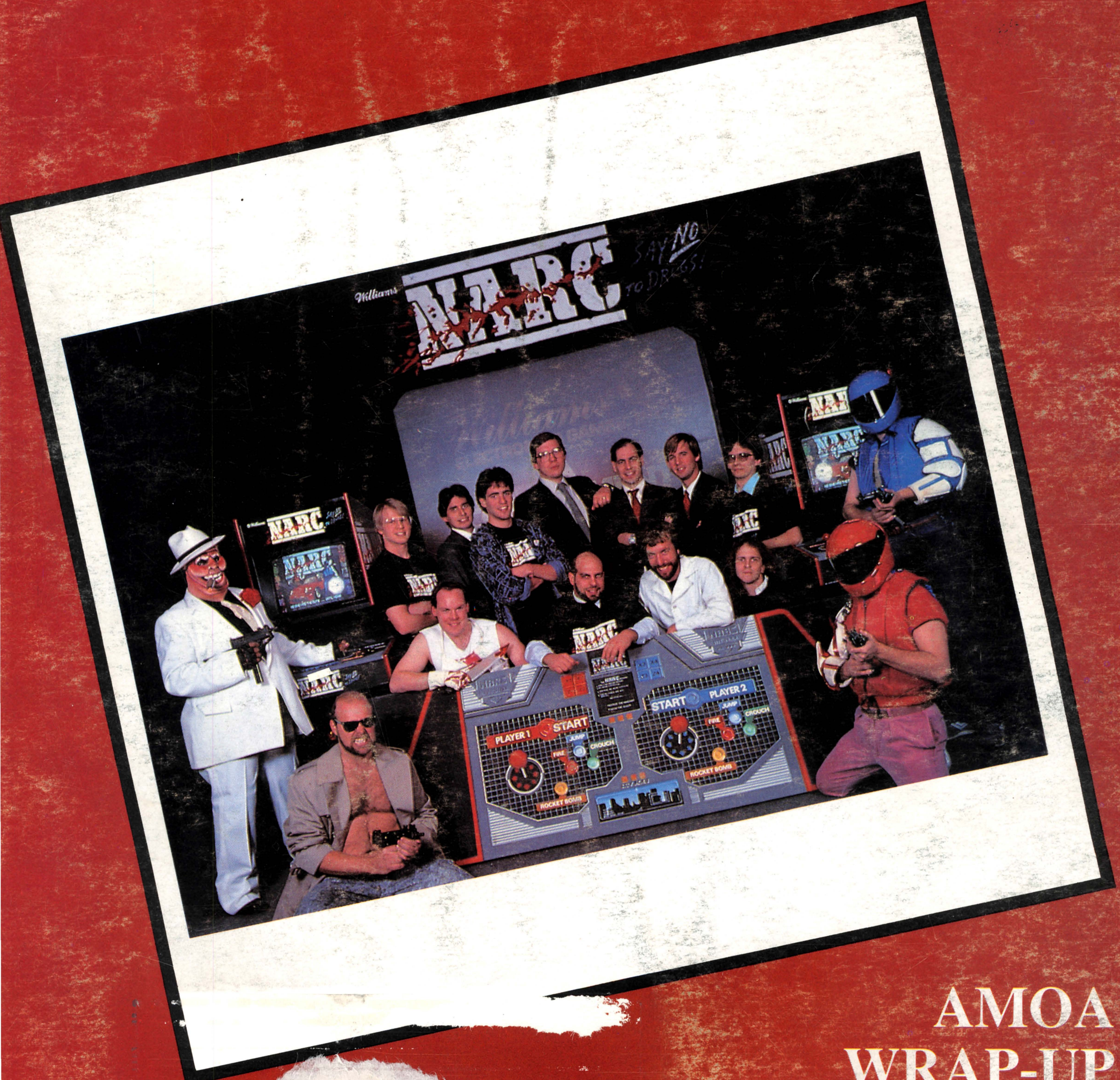
FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

VOLUME 14, NO. 11

PLAY·METER

December 1988


Williams
NARC
SAY NO TO DRUGS!
NARC
NARC
NARC
START
PLAYER 1
START
JUMP
FIRE
CROUCH
ROCKET BOMB
START
PLAYER 2
JUMP
FIRE
CROUCH
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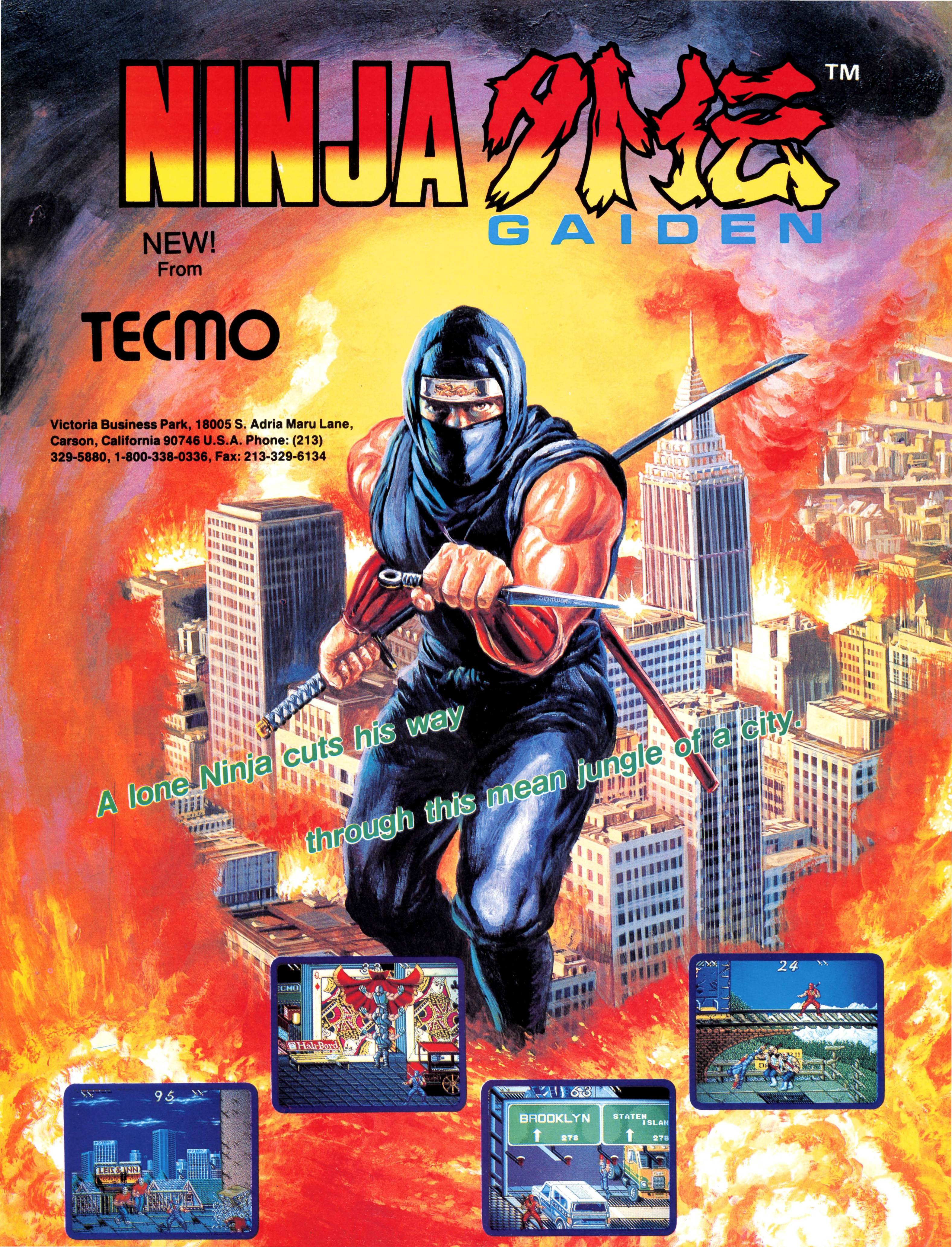
A lone Ninja cuts his way
through this mean jungle of a city.
33
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NEWS BULLETIN

.......The AMOA board of directors has voted to move both the location and the dates of the 1989 AMOA Expo. The show will be in Las Vegas on Sept. 11-13, Monday through Wednesday, according to AMOA's Fred Newton. He said various reasons were cited for changing from Atlanta to Las Vegas, including an inadequate number of hotel and meeting rooms, a desire to move the show west, and a push to stage the show earlier in the year. We'll have more news on the changes in upcoming issues.

.......On Oct. 25, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit handed down its decision in the protracted Arachnid/Merit-Nomac litigation, finding in favor of the Merit Industries' subsidiary in this patent infringement case. The court overruled Arachnid's appeal from its two previous defeats to Merit-Nomac, settling the matter for good. It held that Merit-Nomac's target design is unique and non-infringing. Two different summary judgments were granted to Merit-Nomac for non-infringing design, one on Dec. 15, 1986, the other on May 29, 1987.

.......In other news concerning Merit, it held its first tournament in the Merit Industries World Series of Darts on Oct. 22-23 in San Diego. The event drew players from Sacramento, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and other cities in the Southwest. Over $3,500 in awards, trophies and prizes were given to the top players and raffle winners. ''These tournaments are a great way to show operators, location owners and potential location owners the amount of business that can be generated with electronic darts,'' said tournament director Rick Lynch. ''Every operator should get his location owner involved, because it helps location owners tune into their market. The players appreciate the support.'' Call Lynch at (800) 523-2760 for more information on the next tournament in your area.

.......Taito has appealed the district court decision handed down on Aug. 31 in the Red Baron/Taito case, which held that parallel boards are legal. Taito President Joe Dillon had no comment on the appeal. (The parallel issue continues to spark debate; for proof, read the story on the AMOA legislative update seminar in this issue.)

.......An agreement has been worked out that will keep Bob Lloyd with Data East USA, reversing an earlier announcement that he would be leaving the company on April 1, 1989. According to Tetsuo Fukuda, Data East Corp.'s chairman of the board, Lloyd will move from president of Data East USA and Data East Pinball to chairman of the board for these two entities on April 1. His duties, however, will be the same as they were when he was president. Fukuda will become president of the two companies, though he too will hold the same responsibilities. ''Bob had indicated that should we be able to reach a compromise on several issues, he would consider staying with (Data East),'' Fukuda said. ''It is my firm belief that a greater understanding and cooperation has been established between myself, Bob, and the management staff.''

.......From Rich Moniz of Troy M Enterprises: ''In reference to the ad in Play Meter's November issue, pertaining to Putt Master (TM), notice is hereby issued that Putt Master (TM) is fully copyrighted, 1988, by Troy M Enterprises Inc., and carries a patent pending.''

.......Look for the green $100 rebate coupon in this issue for Gremlin's *Skeet Shoot*, a one- or two-player trap shoot game, and *Grand Slam*, their one- or two-player baseball game. Both games have a newly-designed RF transmitter. The rebate offer is good until January 1989.

.......Steve Blattspieler, who left Bally's coin-op division shortly before its purchase by Williams, is back at Bally as its vice president of marketing.

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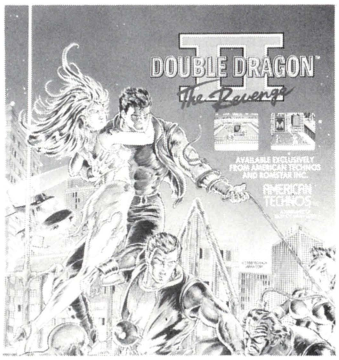
MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE COIN-OPERATED ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

VOL. 14, NO. 11 CONTENTS December, 1988

FEATURES


DOUBLE DRAGON II
The Revenge
AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY FROM AMERICAN TECHNOS AND ROMSTAR INC.
AMERICAN TECHNOS

We'll all remember the war of '88 20

When we think back over the past year, certain events pop into mind: The Bill Beckham lawsuit, basketball games nudging their way into prominence, and the controversy over parallel games. Here's a look back on 1988 and the events that made it a memorable year.

Welcome to
Veryfine fruit juice

NAMA show 42

The National Automatic Merchandisers Association held its annual convention in a city everyone loves to go to mix business and pleasure—New Orleans! Virtually every distributor attended to see the latest in vending equipment and merchandise.

Super Select System

The Winter of our discontent 76

The title of the AMOA wrap-up story describes the discontent most felt as they wandered through the exhibit floor. Many operators had their hearts set on purchasing parallel boards at a substantial savings over the games offered by manufacturers. The equipment on display was seemingly less than what most hoped to see. Here's an overview of the show followed by stories on various events going on throughout the show.

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Cover: Our cover is from Williams and features the creative team responsible for Williams' latest video, *Narc*, previewed at the recent AMOA show. Williams has been the winner in the pinball race for several years, and now the company has re-entered the video market. Williams' *Defender* video was one of the most popular during the video boom days, and judging by its latest entry into video, Williams may be on top of the video market once again. Pictured are: (back row l-r) Todd Allen, Glen Shipp, George Petro, John Newcomer, Larry DeMar, Brian Schmidt, and Al Lasko. (front row l-r) Jack Haegar, Mark Loffredo, Eugene Jarvis, and Marc Locascio.

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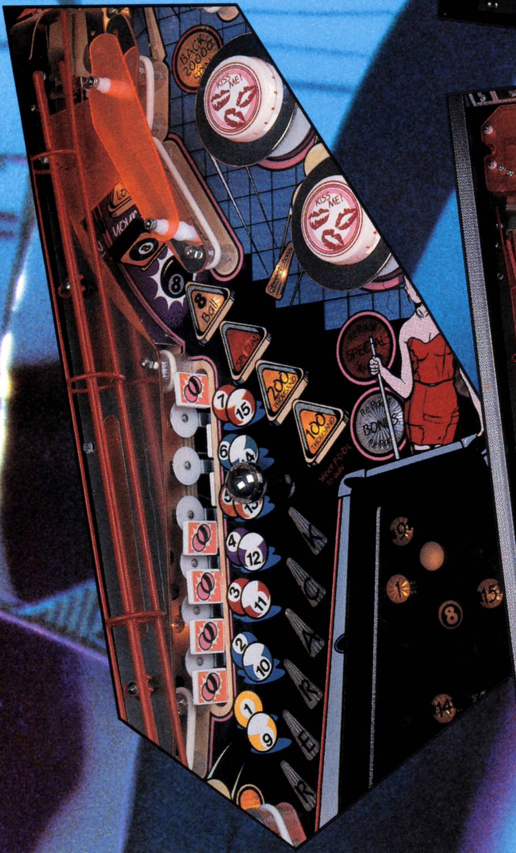
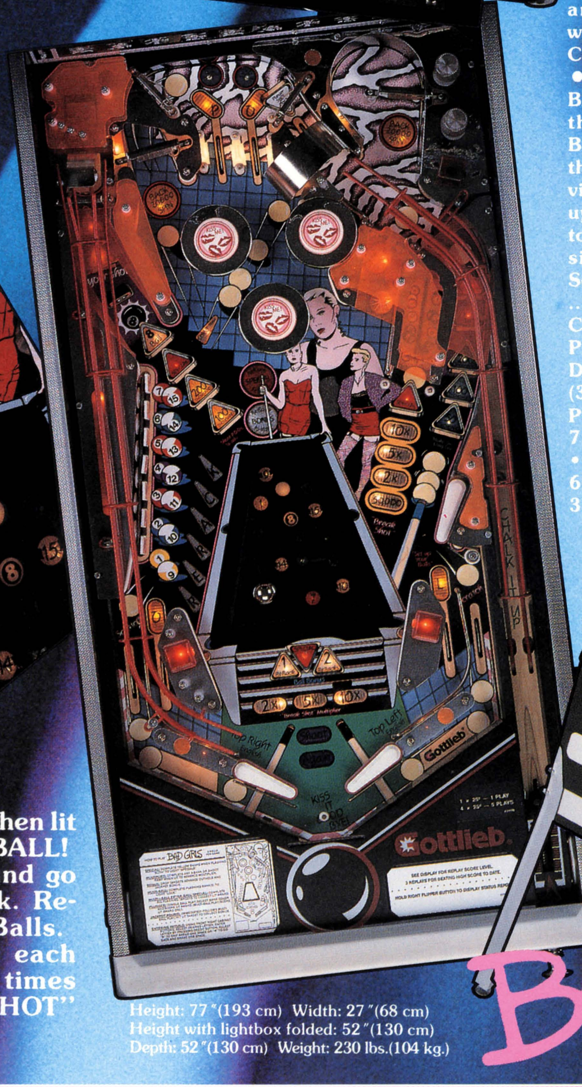

KISS ME!
BONUS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5X
2X
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2X 5X 10X
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- Make the 8-BALL Pocket Shot when lit to set up the fast action of MULTI-BALL!
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Depth: 52"(130 cm) Weight: 230 lbs.(104 kg.)

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Whatever happened to women's hats?

How many of you have heard of William Nichter? I really didn't expect many of you to know the name, but it could have been a name that made history in the hat industry. I'll tell you why you probably haven't heard of him.

William Nichter, who by the way is Howie Rubin's father-in-law, was one of the finest hat designers in the country. He could dazzle with one of his original creations and was praised by all who knew him. He would sell his designs to a manufacturer along with making and selling the molds for all of the different sizes manufacturers needed to sell a decent number of hats.

Nichter didn't so much make his money on the design itself, but profited from the molds the factory bought from him. The profits enabled him to design more eye-popping creations for the customers.

But, the manufacturers discovered that they could buy the design and one mold and have the rest of the molds made right around the corner much, much cheaper. It was an extremely smart business decision on their part because they were saving money, but it was a short-term solution. It wasn't long before Nichter and his competitors found themselves financially unable to continue stunning the hat market with exhilarating, intriguing designs.

Once the creative flow was choked off, the obvious happened. Customers were disillusioned and the demand for hats just wasn't there anymore. Nichter and his fellow hat designers took up other careers. The manufacturers soon discovered that the originality and superior designs were what captured the customers, but those designs were few and far between. Sure the manufacturers saved money, but that did little to rejuvenate a stagnating industry. They could no longer find the striking designs, so the back-street copiers soon had nothing of value to copy.

The designers deserved to make their fair profit to reinvest in the hat industry, enabling them to tantalize the market. Because they made a healthy profit, the manufacturers prospered as well because they were selling what the customers wanted. All of the designs weren't famous or sure-fire winners, but the hits made it possible to continue to create provocative designs.

We're not in the hat business, but we all walked the Expo floor searching frantically for original designs in games, the ones that would knock the players' socks off. Did we find those special games? Unfortunately, the answer is too obvious—the games were OK. But OK just isn't enough. Everyone wants great games, but no one wants to pay for them. While operators have a valid argument about wanting to be able to buy games at reasonable prices or even buying just the board to be used in an available cabinet, manufacturers are obligated to provide stimulating, new concepts for games. If they are not allowed to reap a fair profit, they may follow the path of hat designers and find the demand for mediocre games drying up. Unable to finance the development teams, winning games will become extinct.

If a game turns out to be the proverbial winner, the manufacturer knows that profits from that game may have to carry him through several no-so-hot games. Research and development is an expensive undertaking, requiring dollars that must be made somewhere. As frustrating as it is for buyers of games, the also-rans are more frustrating for those selling them. Operators, you have a big choice: To buy or not to buy. Don't buy games hastily, buy wisely. But if a game comes along that you know is going to be a hit, don't try to cheat the manufacturer out of his rightful profit.

It's not simple and there's no quick solution to finding the good games you need to keep locations and players happy. When a good game comes along, keep in mind that this good game might make a manufacturer a tidy profit that he can reinvest in an even better game next time. Sure, you can look at the short term value of saving a few bucks on a game; it's hard to look down the road at what you will have to choose from in the future.

We all have an obligation to keep innovation alive. We owe it to players, who expect winning games. We owe it to the industry, whose future will be in jeopardy if entertaining games become as scarce as first-class hats.

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

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HOLIDAY GREETING

The Christmas holidays are a time for all of us to reflect on the friendships we've cherished throughout the year, and say thanks to those that have been special during that time. We all have so much to be thankful for, and we at Play Meter want to take this opportunity to wish all of our friends a very happy holiday season. We would not be successful without the loyalty and support from those in the industry that believe in what we are doing because they believe in what the industry is all about. We love this industry and know that those who read our magazine have the same devotion to a business that brings pleasure to so many.

We wish we could name everyone and thank you individually, but you know who you are and we thank you for being there, not just during the past year, but over the 15 years Play Meter has been reporting the news, trends, and innovations in the coin-op entertainment industry. During your company parties after you've popped that first Champagne cork, drink a toast to a great industry and remember us in your prayers. We'll be thanking God for the blessings that true friends bring to us. Bless you all and Happy, Happy Holidays and cheers for a successful, prosperous New Year!

Carol

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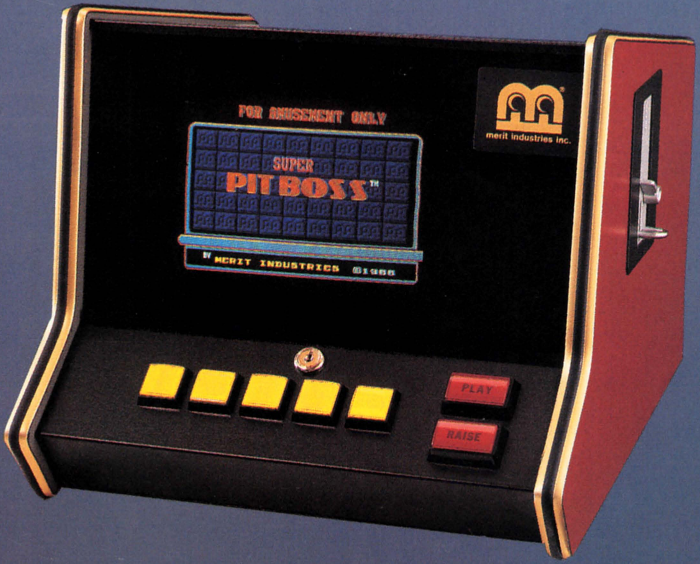
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Mission: Possible

Picture this: our old friend Jim Phelps picks up a tape in an unmarked brown envelope, takes it to a private spot for a quick listen, and gets the details of his team's next mission. In exactly five seconds the tape self-destructs, forever eliminating a traceable connection to the mission.

But wait! This is the 80s. Jim has gone to CDs and VCRs. The IMF team is completely computerized. Gone are the 8x10 glossies. All the moves in preparation for the mission are on tape, viewed by remote control. Some things don't change, however. The shiny silver CD goes up in smoke in five seconds just like the old tape. A comforting reminder of the past.

Back at unnamed headquarters the IMF team assembles, receives assignments, and takes off to locations around the globe in search of justice. Whether on a rescue mission to free hostages, or smuggle a deposed head-of-state out of his homeland to political asylum, the IMF team undertakes the impossible. They battle against the odds, utilize disguises to confuse the enemy, and pull off many a ''sting.'' Their missions always turn out successfully, suspenseful to the end.

Here in the world of coin-op we have a similar *mission*. That mission, should we accept it, is to decide which new games will give us the best R.O.I. in the months ahead. Part of that mission involves gathering twice annually at central meeting points to view the new crop of equipment, going over the program quickly to see what seminars best benefit our businesses, and diving headlong into the fray of some 180-plus booths displaying their wares.

Our headquarters in the fall is the AMOA Expo and in the spring the ACME Expo. The place where the action takes place for us is not a European or South American country, but exhibit floors full of games and services pertaining to our livelihood. The array of games and the ''hype'' may be confusing so we must take this mission seriously. After all, our future depends upon it.

It's difficult to get through all the ''positives'' being thrown about at different booths and get to the core of a game. Seasoned operators know what types of games appeal to their customers. They know what systems have helped them and which ones have not. They know what ''holes'' exist at their different locations and are looking for games to fill them. As one operator put it a few years ago, game takes quoted from big San Francisco arcades don't help him if he doesn't have such locations. It's hit or miss anyway you slice it, an impossible mission that we would like to make possible.

After viewing games on the floor for the first time and playing them, it's helpful to listen to the remarks of players, other operators, and distributors. The interaction among fellow operators is one of the major benefits of this mission. Where else would a chance present itself to hear what plays well for the other guy with a similar route? Attending distributor open houses for a second look is always wise in gathering more input to add to already formed ''gut'' reactions.

We hope our mission turns out successfully, and we are always in suspense waiting to see what the cashbox will bring. Will this game be a two-week wonder or a year-long smash? Are we sitting on a bomb or another *Double Dragon*? Is it Hall of Fame time or will our game choices be ''also rans?''

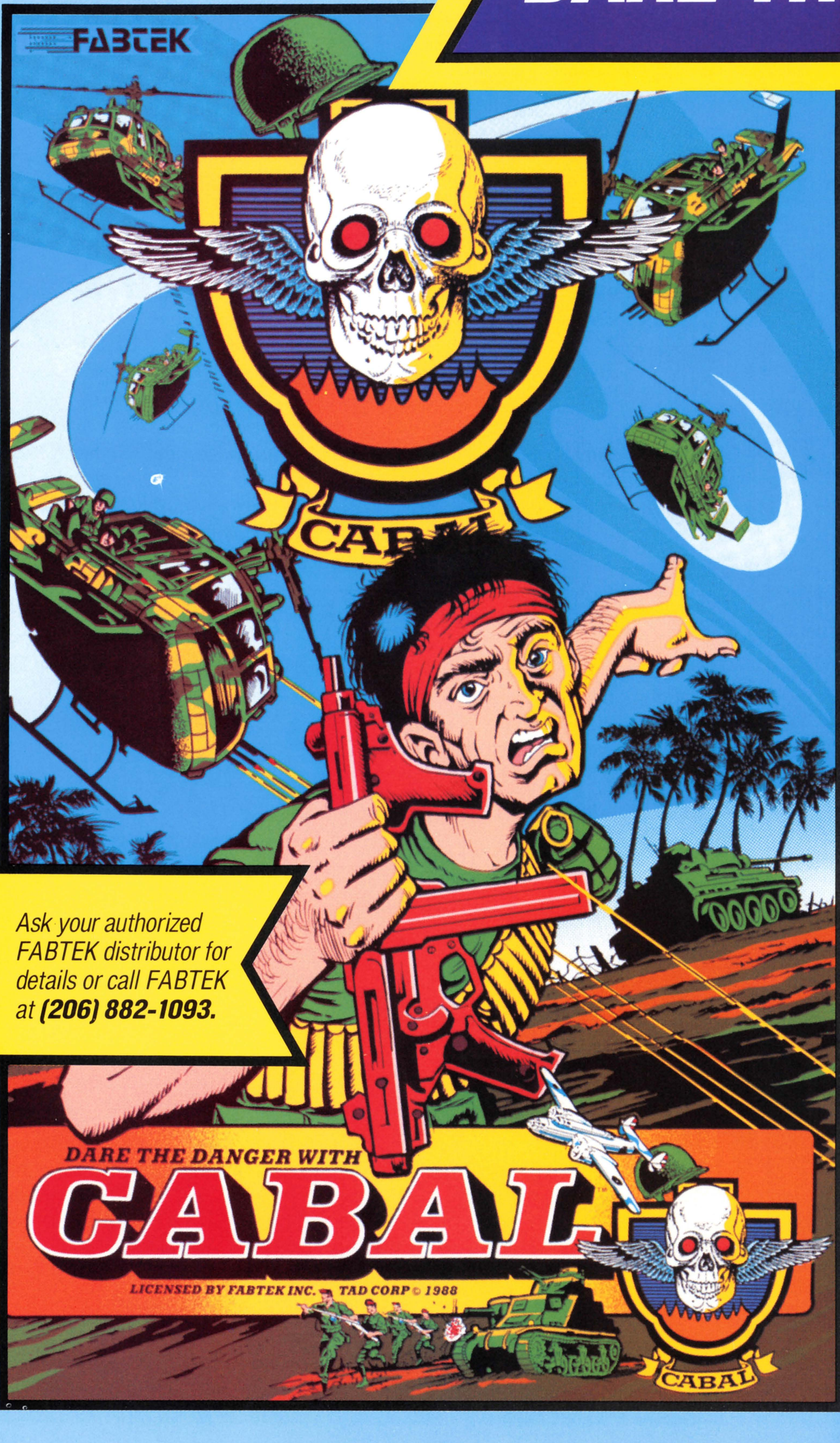
Unfortunately, if selections don't live up to their expectations, the manufacturers will disavow any knowledge of the games and close-outs will be appearing in the classified section.

Good luck, operators.

Bonnie Theard

Bonnie Theard

DARE THE DANGER



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LETTERS

Bull Sheet

Editor's Note: We get some very interesting comments on our Bull Sheet card that appears in every issue. Here is a sampling of the views of operators from around the country:

I need information to help me make decisions about which games to buy. *That* is my primary reason for subscribing. Please put together more spots that look into the pluses and minuses of different games and more on repair and techniques to help us keep our machines running. Basically, do more of what ''Frank the Crank'' used to do until he deserted the grassroots sector of the industry.

Dexter, Mich.

What is the average markup an operator pays a distributor for equipment? And why doesn't the manufacturer list a suggested price when advertising new equipment? Can an operator buy direct from a manufacturer, one or two at a time?

Key West, Fla.

We have serious problems with the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. They frequently approve new games and then after two or three months they disapprove, leaving operators with hundreds of useless new boards.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Thank you so much for the articles on troubleshooting. I would like to see more of the same, such as how to use a digital probe.

Worcester, Mass.

We would also. Technical writers are the most difficult to collar. We welcome contributions from all of our readers who can share their troubleshooting experiences with fellow operators.

I am quite pleased with your magazine and feel that you should include even more short facts or articles on game news, maybe even call it Short Game News. Keep up the good work.

Worcester, Mass.

We love comments like these. Keep 'em comin'. Honestly, none of our staff has any relatives in Worcester, Mass.

Attention Randy Fromm's Repair Log (good idea). Current repairs in my shop include an OBA $1 to $5 bill acceptor (jukebox). Problem: will not accept dollars. Solution: CIO bad, not letting signal through. Many other things could be bad. But this was one problem.

Flint, Mich.

It's really too bad that some of the people who advertise in your magazine say they offer excellent service and price but can't deliver. I have been burned twice now by one particular company. And it's always the same old story. Twice I have just had to demand my money back. Is there any company out there that we can buy refurbished games from that won't try to refurbish us? I'm beginning to think not.

Chicago, Ill.

We're sorry that you have had difficulties with one of our advertisers. This is the first time we have received a complaint on the company you mentioned. Unfortunately, in this business there is so much emphasis on new equipment that there are few choices for those seeking used and restored equipment. Companies that fill this need are invited to drop us a line. We'll be happy to pass on your name in the magazine.

Some distributors who are also operating companies have a good reputation for ''shopping'' equipment in-house after a successful run on their routes. Game auctions are another good source of used equipment. Talk with fellow operators and find out where they have turned for the not-so-new but still viable games. And check out the distributing companies in your state.

We keep a complaint file and will be happy to answer questions from callers who want to check out a company to see if there are dissatisfied customers. Your card is going into that file.

Thank you for letting us know about your problem.—Bonnie.

Action Card

Editor's Note: Our reader Action Card was designed to provide more product information on games and services described in the magazine. Manufacturers like this one have responded to the inquiries and sent product information along with this letter:

I've enclosed our follow-up to your Action Card response. We appreciate the opportunity to inform our customers and your readers regarding Exidy's status in the marketplace.

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At Williams, the challenge to be pinball's best comes from within

Marty Glazman has a story he likes to tell that illustrates the burning sense of pride at Williams, a feeling that permeates every employment level at the pinball giant.

''A film crew from Chicago TV station WGN came to Williams to do a story, and the reporter went to talk to one of our line workers,'' Glazman recalls with a chuckle. ''He was asked why he was playing a pinball machine in the cafeteria, and his answer was, 'Because I have pride in what I build.' That was completely unrehearsed. It shows the strong sense of pride here at Williams.''

Marty Glazman

Since its inception in 1942, Williams has been at the forefront in pinball innovations. Included among these ''firsts'' are the following: in 1954, *Big Ben* was the first pinball with a midget playfield on the larger one; 1960's *Magic Clock* was the first pinball with a moving target; the industry saw the first pinball with two balls in play at the same time with 1963's *Beat the Clock*; in 1979 *Gorgar* became the first talking pinball; and in 1985 *Comet* offered the first opportunity for players to score a million points with a single shot.

That is a mere sampling of Williams' trend-setting status in the industry, but it reinforces the company's simple, driving credo: never rest on your laurels if you want to stay on top.

> *''I think people will be surprised at the new Bally. !''*

The acquisition

This attitude was never more in evidence than the summer of 1988, when Williams' parent company, WMS Industries, acquired Bally Manufacturing's pinball and video game division. The purchase of these coin-op assets went for a reported $8 million. (Note: There are three separate divisions or entities: WMS, Williams, and Bally Midway.)

''The transition has been quite smooth; the intent is to keep Williams' product line while giving Bally its own design and sales team,'' said Roger Sharpe, director of marketing. ''It shows a corporate commitment to excellence when you take a guy away from Williams with no peer, Steve Kordek, and turn him loose on Bally's creative talent. (Kordek is mentioned in this month's News, as he has just been appointed Bally's director of game design.)

''Bally really didn't have that commitment before Williams' acquisition. We hope Steve can generate the same excitement with the Bally team that he did at Williams. I think people will be surprised at the new Bally.''

Adds Glazman, vice president of sales: ''It's quite simple. The Bally people are very talented and artistic, but they're young. They needed that veteran director and choreographer, and they've got it in Steve Kordek. He's got 50 years experience in the business.''

But how, then, does the joining of the two companies benefit the operator? ''It will give him an additional choice among innovative quality products,'' Glazman said. ''It means higher R.O.I., higher collections, and higher reliability.''

Sharpe says part of Williams' edge comes from a basic yet clear understanding of its role.

''What we do is just amusement; the bottom line is adding as much entertainment for that coin as possible,'' he explained. ''That involves a total package: graphics, cosmetics, sound, everything. We continue to astound people with better and better games.

> *''The bottom line is adding as much entertainment for that coin as possible.''*

''The attitude is one of being hungry. We're not willing to rest on laurels or past successes. Gottlieb had it and lost it. Bally had it and lost it. Williams has it and refuses to lose it. We understand the dynamics of our product line.''

Glazman attributes much of Williams' pinball powers to cohesive teamwork, or as he put it, having no ''prima donnas'' among the games division's 1,000-plus employees.

''We've assembled the greatest teams of engineers, designers, salesmen, and marketing people,'' he said. ''It's a team effort. An idea evolves and is enhanced as it passes from person to person. This teamwork and an openness to accept new things allows Williams to be the leader.''

Both Glazman and Sharpe agree that competition from the other pinball manufacturers spurs Williams on, but it's an internal desire to reach ever higher that is the chief impetus.

''We blew the world away with *Comet, Space Shuttle* and *High Speed*, and people kept saying, 'You can't do it again,''' Glazman said. ''But we can do it again. We haven't peaked yet. People will catch that Williams' magic after they've seen our newest pin, *Taxi*.

''The thing is, we have fun doing what we do at Williams. The player then has fun, and that translates into dollars for the

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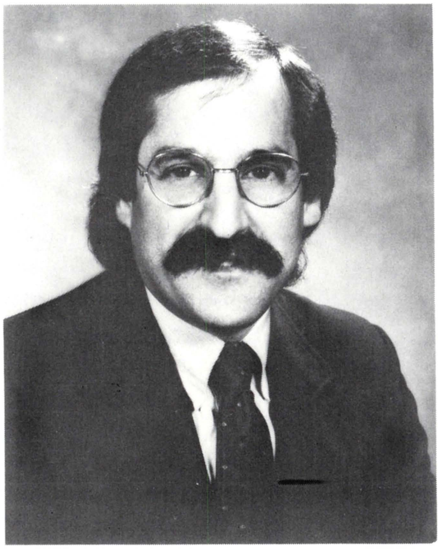


Roger Sharpe

operator. We listen to our operators and distributors; it's part of our commitment to excellence. Every card they send in gets read, whether it contains criticism or praise."

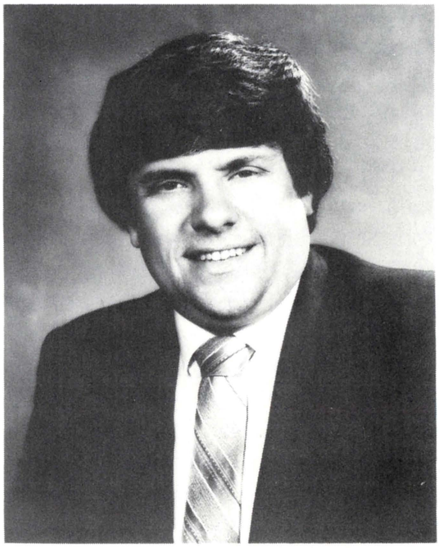
> *"It (pinball) is an unreplicated art form that you can't get on a home system."*

Says Sharpe, "Bally and Williams are two strong companies leading the way and lifting people up. Williams has single-handedly lifted up pinball and kept it viable. But we do need competition from the other manufacturers to keep the whole pinball line viable."

Down the road

1988 was, according to Glazman, "a decent year; not as good as 1987." The ongoing quality of the product makes him optimistic about 1989. For his part, Sharpe is of the mind that new horizons have yet to be explored.

Game designers Mark Richie (l) and Python Angelo.



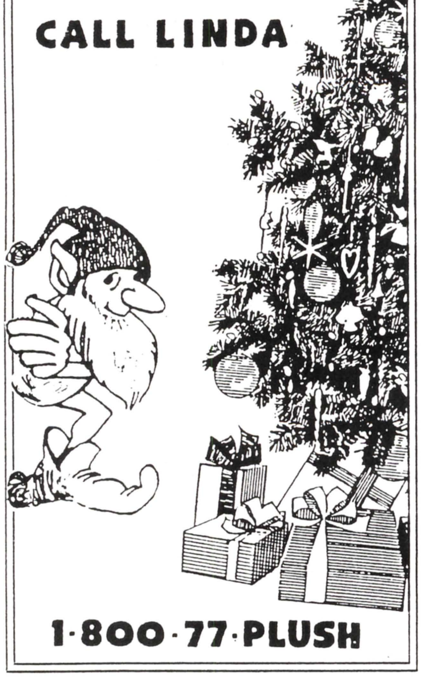
Ken Fedesna

"Pinball will continue to grow. It's an unreplicated art form that you can't get on a home system," Sharpe said. "With pinball, you have something that's endured over five decades. It's a staple that should at least double in size over the coming years."

Glazman didn't want the Williams story to be written without mentioning the contributions of general manager Ken Fedesna.

"Ken is a former engineer who's worked his way up in the company; he deserves a lot of credit," Glazman said. "Ken gives the different teams the freedom to operate, to be creative. He cares, and he has an attitude that allows everyone to do their own thing."

Let's see now, how about a pinball with... what's that, Williams already has one like that? Figures. ☐



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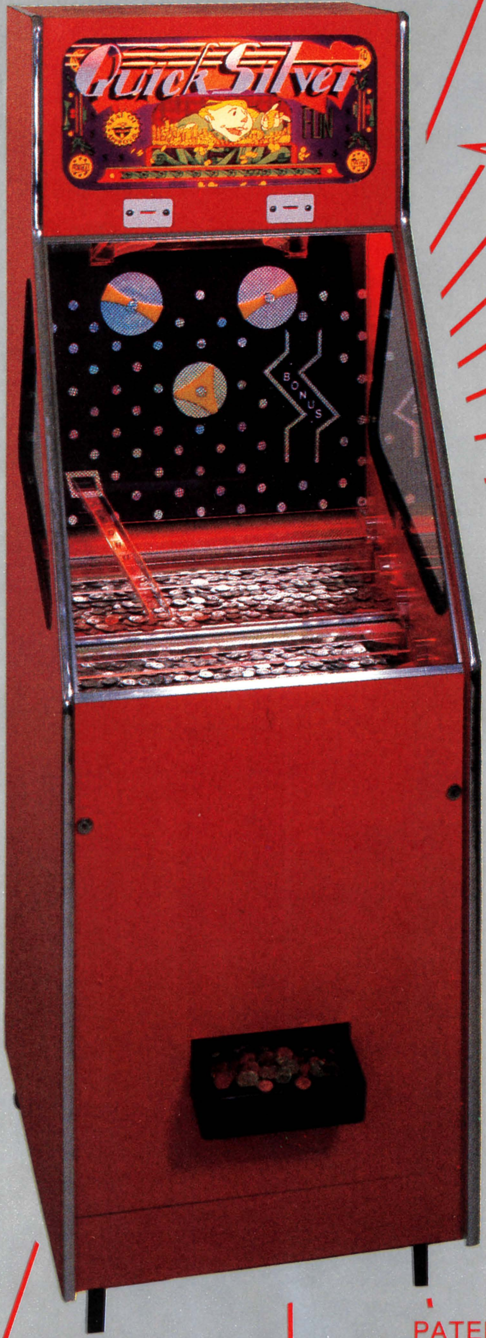

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We'll all remember the War of '88

by Valerie Cognevich

The coin-op entertainment industry leaped into 1988 anxious to continue on the road to recovery and assured success. Most of those that had survived the crunch were taking steps to make sure they would not be caught napping. One operator summed it up perfectly when he said, "I learned my lesson once and I don't want to get caught with my pants down again."

The precautions were well-founded, as the market was flooded with very few good return-on-investment pieces. The Amusement and Music Operators (AMOA) Expo, the place to satisfy expectations and offer the best of the best, in 1988 turned out to be not so much a selling show as a "be sold" show. No single piece of equipment emerged as the hit of the show, leaving operators even more confused over what to buy. Toward the end of 1987, operators were not parting with their hard-earned dollars quite as freely as they had been known to do in the past.

It was even more shocking to see games being proudly displayed when, in fact, operators knew those same games were already being discounted in distributors' showrooms. Operators who already were comparing the state of the industry to much earlier days were horrified to realize that manufacturers had so little confidence in their product that they didn't even get it to the show before reducing the price.

Taito's much demanded *Double Dragon* became the center of controversy.

> *"I learned my lesson once and I don't want to get caught with my pants down again."*

If product seemed impressive, complaints about availability, cost, and quality were heard more often than not on the exhibit floor.

Atari took a look back at what was really, *really* successful and pulled *Pacmania* out of the ruins of the industry's past. While the game was fun and unique, carrying our rotund, yellow friend into the modern world of 3-D, one operator said, "I just can't believe they are reviving *Pac-Man*. I think that theme has certainly been done to death."

Another operator, perhaps searching for the magic of 1981, offered these comments: "The *Pac-Man* theme was overdone with mediocre games. The publicity and name could help a good game but hurt a bad game."

At a time when operators were finding it harder to justify the cost of the latest games, they were being shown a smorgasbord of equipment sporting even higher price tags. Oftentimes the cabinet was more appealing and compelling to players than the actual game play itself. But getting-what-you-pay-for seemed to be a more pressing problem to operators. Most said they didn't mind paying for a *good* dedicated game, but were relentless in their quest for quality games that seemed to be only a memory from the past. If quality was at the top of operators' list of importance, it seemed to be slipping nearer the bottom of the manufacturers' roster.

United or divided?

Operators thought they had found an alternative in parallel boards, reasoning that if they couldn't get quality games already assembled, they would buy the board and make their own games. Parallel boards are also called "original boards" because they are produced by the original manufacturer in Japan and operated on routes over there, then sold to an importer who brings them into the United States to sell. The boards were enticing to operators because, like a used car, the cost was lower. Equally alluring was the opportunity to buy just the board like operators in other countries were offered.

AMOA stated in an official position paper: "Manufacturers should pursue marketing and pricing policies which result in all game operators being treated

Basketball games like Vari Tech's *Hot Shots* became very popular.

equally regardless of their geographic location. If true equality of treatment among operators existed, AMOA believes that the use of parallel boards would disappear.’’

‘‘I spit on that cabinet and it fell apart.’’

Manufacturers, while stepping-up enforcement efforts against copied games, had added parallel games to their task, foreseeing a potential problem with those boards. The American Amusement Machine Association’s (AAMA) chief enforcer, Bob Fay, was relentless in his quest to pursue operators who included parallels on their routes.

While most operators clung to their ideals and didn’t want to get involved with parallel boards, there were some who believed that parallels were not illegal. Either way, there had never been a court case to prove it one way or the other. The industry awaited a ruling in the COPIAT case involving other industries seeking a decision on the legality or illegality of parallel goods. It was hoped that somehow the decision in this case would bring the industry closer to knowing whether parallel boards were legal or illegal. However, when the COPIAT decision was handed down, it did little to alleviate the doubts or answer the questions.

The COPIAT group, about 80 United States companies and trade organizations formed to fight gray market goods, filed a suit against the Customs Service. They claimed that Customs was violating a 1936 Tariff Act by allowing the gray market goods into the United States. Customs defended its position, claiming that the Tariff Act did not require them to stop the goods.

The Supreme Court agreed that Customs was not doing anything wrong and was not required to stop parallel goods. Operators were no closer to understanding whether parallel goods were legal because nothing had really changed. We did know, however, that Customs was not required to stop parallel goods. Once the goods entered the country, a manufacturer then could prosecute under the Copyright Law. (It had never been tested.)

‘‘Now we’ll be calling 1988 coin-op’s year of the basketball game.’’

Bob Fay said of the COPIAT ruling: ‘‘For 58 years Customs has not stopped the goods and this ruling just says that they still don’t have to. However, the Copyright issue was not even discussed and, as before, once those goods enter the United States, the Copyright Law of 1976 kicks in. This case did not, by any means, prove that parallel boards are legal.’’

The lawsuit

The issue of parallel board legality raged throughout the industry, with manufac-

THE MORE
THEY PLAY,

THE BETTER
THEY GET

turers staunchly defending their position that they were illegal, and operators left confused and not quite certain whether to believe the manufacturers or not.

The battle was still seething and AAMA was beefing up its enforcement efforts when an operator filed a lawsuit against AAMA and a manufacturer. Poor quality soon played a major role in this "suit of the century" when Bill Beckham of Red Baron in Toledo, Ohio, filed against Taito and AAMA. Taito's game *Double Dragon* was the hottest game in town since *Pac-Man* and, naturally, every operator in the country was anxious to add the game to his route.

Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson signs the bill legalizing cranes in the state.

> *"With a decent game at a decent price, both operator and manufacturer can enjoy a comfortable living."*

It turned out, however, that demand far outweighed supply. Even when an operator did get the game (sold as a dedicated game only), the cabinet was of such poor quality that modifications were needed, sometimes before the game was ever put on location. "I spit on that cabinet and it fell apart," quipped an operator, illustrating the shoddy construction of the cabinet.

Beckham fumed over the fact that he was forced to buy the entire game, knowing he could put it in a much better cabinet if he could have bought the board only. It was an added affront that the game was offered as a kit in other countries.

Beckham, who formed an organization called American Operators For Equal Treatment (AOET), said: "We picked one company, one plaintiff, and one dedicated game in order to keep the fact situation as clear and simple as possible. As we have said all along, we feel that a case based only on the parallel issue and the tie-in factor, without other complicating details such as graphics violation and copy boards, will be ruled in our favor."

During the summer both sides agreed to drop all other charges and counter-charges and have a judge rule solely on the parallel board issue. In August the judge ruled in Beckham's favor, enraging the manufacturers who had been certain of victory.

The glamour of Reno captivated ACME Expo attendees.

> *'If quality was at the top of the operators' list of importance, it seemed to be slipping nearer the bottom of the manufacturers' roster."*

However, the manufacturers' anger was aimed mostly toward the inevitable less-than-reputable companies more than willing to sell boards, any boards, to operators seeking parallels. Operators felt betrayed by AAMA, which had warned that parallel boards were illegal and threatened operators if they used them. However, AAMA is now countering that it had not singled out parallel boards, but that parallel boards were sometimes confiscated with copies in raids.

Even now, operators are not fully aware of the facts. First, parallel boards actually make up a very small percentage of boards purchased because there are not that many available. One manufacturer added that most likely, when an operator is buying a questionable board, it's probably going to be a copy board, which is 100 percent illegal, no questions asked.

The most vulnerable group in this controversy are the operators who may unintentionally buy illegal boards, assuming the issue has been settled and everything is OK. Wrong on more than one count. The Bill Beckham/Taito case involved only one operator, one game, and one city. The judge ruled that Bill Beckham in Toledo can legally operate *Double Dragon* true parallel boards. It's a far stretch to make ALL boards legal.

To further confuse the matter, AAMA's new enforcement officer, Bill Kidwell, reported that an entire shipment of *Double Dragon* boards were stopped and proven to be copies and not parallels.

> *''Manufacturers, while stepping-up enforcement efforts against copied games, had added parallel games to their task, foreseeing a potential problem with those boards.''*

Other games

Operators disillusioned by video games were searching for ways to beef up collections. For two years cranes were growing in popularity. In fact, we referred to 1987 as the year of the crane. Now we'll be calling 1988 coin-op's year of the basketball game.

When Ken Cochran, a former college basketball coach, began developing the concept for coin-operated basketball in 1982, little did he realize the impact the sport-for-a-coin game would have on the industry. His game and company are both called Pop-A-Shot. His game has been placed in the National Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Mass. Cochran said, ''We knew of the universal appeal that basketball enjoyed, but this has exceeded our expectations. Our business has quadrupled since 1984.''

The basketball craze hit mammoth proportions as more than a dozen manufacturers added their version to the basketball game line-up. Cochran said, ''There's still room on the roundball bandwagon for those companies with good, quality games.''

Merit Industries, one of the leading manufacturers in the industry, made a quantum leap in electronic darts and con-

THE BETTER
THEY GET,

THE QUICKER
THE GAME

tinued that stride with a basketball game. ''Our research shows a strong market out there,'' noted Dave Rubenstein, Merit's national sales manager.

Operator Tom Large of Columbus, Ohio, said, ''Basketball has been around for a long time; everyone knows it and understands it. The game is a lot of fun.''

Cranes and rotary merchandising equipment was still very visible during 1988, though a few companies dropped out of the market. There were nearly 20 manufacturers offering redemption equipment in 1988, although several take the lion's share of the sales.

The list of companies selling product for stocking redemption machines continued to increase. At last count, over 40 companies were offering various merchandise in an even bigger variety of packages to stock machines. The choices are immense and includes some favorites like the California Raisins, Roger Rabbit, Disney characters, and much, much more. Jewelry, digital watches, mini calculators, and novelty items are also popular items for enticing players to the machines.

It would be hard to explain the introduction of Rowe's CD phonograph except to say, it's what a lot of operators have been waiting for. Speculation about the future of the jukebox industry is rampant and Rowe had been cautious about introducing a CD box. It had offered operators a combination 45/CD unit to test the waters first.

NSM, a jukebox company with a loyal following, also delved into the CD business. No one has the answer to the question of whether CDs will replace 45s, but each company is trying to offer what operators need to make money.

Legislation

Although cranes continued as a moneymaker for operators, adverse legislation haunted the industry. In Michigan, for example, carnival games had been confiscated in the early 80s, and there happened to be some redemption games included in the raid. Operators in that state enjoyed hassle-free operation of the new cranes with no interference from lawmakers until last year when an operator went to the attorney general for an opinion. The powers-that-be dusted off the ruling on carnival games and thereby decided that cranes were, in fact, illegal. Feeling that the old ruling was not meant to include cranes, Michigan operators enlisted the help of state representative Debbie Stabenow to introduce legislation to ''affirm their legal use.''

The Georgia Department of Revenue took a position that declares cranes a form of gambling. The Georgia operators association took steps to educate the legislators on the distinction of gambling and amusement.

In Ohio and California, operators worked diligently on legislation dealing with cranes. In October of 1986 Ohio received an unoffical opinion that cranes were games of skill rather than games of chance. However, the Ohio operators association pointed out, ''A few unscrupulous operators became greedy and misused this equipment, causing problems for legitimate operators.'' An Ohio operator, Dave Cogdeill, who was indicted on five separate counts for operating cranes after a complaint was filed in 1987, was cleared of all charges. The Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA) assisted in Cogdeill's defense.

On the bright side, Wisconsin had a legislative victory when cranes were ruled perfectly legal in that state. The Wisconsin Music and Music Operators Association (WAMO) lobbyist, Tom Coenen, said: ''The bill was well-orchestrated from the beginning.'' Members were urged to help support the legislators who helped pass the bill.

Gray area games

States weren't stopping at cranes when it came to legislating equipment. Video poker games were being picked up, discussed, ruled against, you name it. In Hialeah, Fla., for example, councilman Herman Echevarria happily handed over a quarter to his young son to play a game. The councilman was horrified to discover that his son had spent the quarter to play a video poker game. Declaring that he didn't want his son to become addicted to gambling, he drafted an ordinance to ban ALL video games. The city council overturned the mayor's veto of the bill and as it stands today, video games will disappear from Hialeah by 1990. There's bound to be more discussion on this topic as 1990 approaches.

This is a prime example of how an industry can be vulnerable and not even realize it. All games banned because one operator did not think about the repercussions of placing a video card game where children would be playing games. The coin-op industry continues to make strides

LARAMIE
INTERESTS
"TRUST R PLUSH TO US"
N, TEXAS
144

Plush suppliers like Laramie Interests were joined by many new companies offering pre-packs and other crane and redemption merchandise.

in the direction of reliability, respectability, and understanding, but incidents like this one only serve to cancel out accomplishments.

Over in Indiana the police commandeered pinball machines along with their raid on "gambling equipment." According to police, the machines matched the description of what makes an amusement machine a gambling machine.

Other states including Louisiana, New Jersey, Illinois, and Mississippi were also feeling the repercussions of the public's attitude on gambling equipment and amusement games in general.

Amusement game operators who oftentimes also operate cigarette vending machines saw that segment of their business dealt a lethal blow when the surgeon general pulled out all stops in trying to have cigarette vending machines banned. The reasoning was that children were tempted to buy cigarettes that they should not be able to buy. One operator said, "I don't think that the public wants a ban on cigarette machines. I don't think anyone can force that down the public's throat."

> *"Operators will continue to look for alternatives in equipment promising longevity."*

Manufacturers

The big story of the year on the manufacturing level was the purchase of Bally's video and pinball division by former competitor, Williams Electronics, a subsidiary of WMS Inc. The company retained the name Bally and will manufacturer both Bally and Williams product. Williams, feeling that Bally didn't have the commitment needed to produce quality, viable product, spared top designer Steve Kordek to work with Bally. The companies exhibited their latest products in two separate booths.

One of the industry's most respected men and president of AAMA, Frank Ballouz, departed his position at Nintendo of America to start his own company. His first game, *Dead Angle*, may not have been the hit he hoped for, but his next offering, *Cabal*, was everything any manufacturer would be glad to have.

The Japanese company Jaleco opened an office in the United States. The company signed an agreement with Nintendo to sell games for the Nintendo home system. In September, Jaleco introduced a coin-op game, *P-47*, that soon appeared on top ten game charts. Said sales representative Larry Berke: "We would rather let our products speak for themselves rather than do a lot of hype and have nothing to sell."

A new manufacturer, Allme, hung its in-business sign out in Chicago and announced plans to introduce five new products in the near future. Allme specializes in pinball, cocktail pinball, and video games.

THE QUICKER
THE GAME,

THE MORE QUARTERS
YOU EARN!

Industry veterans Art Warner, Richard Silverman, and Wylie Irwin left Betson and started their own company called Coin Concepts. They will focus efforts on redemption equipment.

Home games

A tale that has been told for several years involves home video games. When Atari first introduced the concept of playing popular games in the privacy of your own home, the industry rose in opposition and complete indignation at the very thought of stealing players from the arcades. At the time, technology for home games lagged considerably behind that for coin-op. However, the coin-op industry was shaken up. The "fad" did not last long and it wasn't a minute too soon that home videoers unplugged the controls and retired the immature systems to attics and basements.

> *"There's no doubt operators are finding it more difficult to buy video games that will outlast the payments."*

Then Nintendo introduced its Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) and all the fears returned. For some reason, the intensity of the opposition to home games was not as severe. An operator stated: "I see no cause for resentment. No doubt there are some movie studios that resent the thousands of video stores throughout the country selling video movies for the home. But to my way of thinking, home video games cannot begin to compete with large commercial model coin-op video games in any manner, shape, or form. Neither can the home movies compete with a new, exciting movie shown for the first time in theaters."

But Nintendo faced operators' displeasure. When Nintendo declared its intention to limit its coin-op ventures to new games for the *Play Choice-10*, operators seemed to feel it was deserting the coin-op industry. However, vice president Alan Stone reaffirmed Nintendo's dedication to coin-op, saying: "We're going back to basics, doing what we do best. And that means working hard to give operators solid, technologically-advanced game systems and an ongoing staple of quality software. Exactly what they need to stay profitable. We're all in it together for the long haul."

Although home systems seemed to be blanketing the United States, one thing was different from a decade ago. During that first boom, most of the game producers were outside companies with no understanding of the coin-op industry. Today, many of the leading coin-op manufacturers are also directly involved in the marketing of the home version of their games. This affords a much better understanding of the needs of the coin operator as well as the needs of their own companies.

Dollar coin

The coin-op industry was actively seeking support for a new dollar coin. The Susan B. Anthony dollar coin was unsuccessful and 500 million of them are now in storage. While operators remained divided as to whether or not a dollar coin would help them raise collections, two congressmen from Ohio called the idea "nuts." (Managing editor Bonnie Theard takes a look at the dollar coin in an article in this issue.)

Promotions

AAMA promoted its enforcement head, Bob Fay, to the position of executive vice president, allowing him to focus more attention on promotional activities. AAMA president Frank Ballouz said of the promotion: "Bob knows the industry and its needs. I believe he has a firm grasp on what is necessary to make this a stronger, more unified industry, and will work and support all sections." Fay added, "We plan to put the emphasis on promoting the coin-operated amusement game industry."

Working together, AMOA and AAMA co-sponsored a poster/flyer campaign featuring major sports celebrities to promote public awareness of child abuse and its prevention. Working with the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, they sought out placement of public service announcements in national magazines to bring attention to the seriousness of the problem.

The two associations also co-sponsored a gameroom for the 1988 United States Olympic team and staff in Los Angeles during final processing before the team left for Seoul, South Korea.

AAMA was also busy working on some other projects and promotions. Working with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), AAMA released a 30-second television public service announcement that takes place in an arcade. The goal was to portray the amusement industry in a favorable light.

AMOA held its third annual Government Affairs Conference that drew record attendance. Senators and representatives were invited to participate in a pinball tournament. Notably, Indiana Senator Dan Quayle (who later rose to fame as a vice presidential candidate) and his family were big pinball winners.

> *"Manufacturers are facing another crisis as the value of the dollar continues its decline compared to the yen."*

ACME

Play Meter and AAMA, sponsors of the American Coin Machine Expo, had decided to hold the show in Reno. It was the first time an international show was held that far west and it turned out to be one of the biggest successes to date. In fact, because the show drew more West Coast operators than expected, plans were made to hold it in Reno the next year. Following ACME's lead, AMOA decided that moving a show around might be an advantage and announced plans to have the AMOA Expo in Atlanta in 1989. Other cities, including Orlando, Fla., and Anaheim, Calif., will host the AMOA Expo in future years.

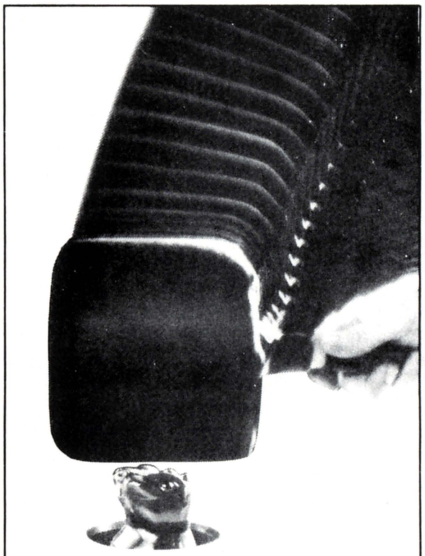
Outlook

There's no doubt operators are finding it more difficult to buy video games that will outlast the payments. Feeling animosity toward manufacturers is natural given the outward appearance of greediness. But manufacturers are facing another crisis as the value of the dollar continues its decline compared to the yen. Manufacturers are paying the Japanese the same amount of yen for product, but it is actually costing them much more in dollars.

Manufacturers are sensitive to operators' situations and if they're not, they had better understand why operators are not buying new equipment. Storage space will continue to expand for games that operators term 30-day wonders, close-outs will slip into the industry again, and the number of new games will probably increase even though most will not provide a good return on investment.

Operators will continue to look for alternatives in equipment promising longevity. Basketball, darts, pool, jukeboxes, and novelty-type games will continue to make up a good percentage of new-game purchases.

In the coming year we can only hope that manufacturers will stabilize game prices and finally realize what operators need to be successful. Every operator does not have a big arcade nor can he afford all those dedicated pieces. Just as American car manufacturers are amazed to sell more of their inventories when special interest rates are offered, there's no mystery to selling a lot of coin-op games. Reasonable prices make for increased purchases. With a decent game at a decent price, both operator and manufacturer can enjoy a comfortable living. ☐



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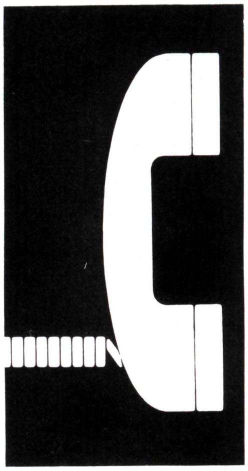

Question:

How have your collections been for this year as compared to last year?

A

Ralph Fleege
Mitchell Novelty Co.
Milwaukee, Wisc.

I'd say that across the board, receipts are down; the climate is more negative than positive. I've had a decline in cigarette vending revenues. There's been some increase in CD jukeboxes, but that hasn't offset a downturn in phonograph money. Successfully legalizing cranes has helped, but other factors have offset this too.

Video game receipts are about even compared to last year. Proper game rotation and keeping outstanding pieces in your stable is necessary for street routes, but it hasn't led to increases in collections. Things aren't as lucrative as they might have been, say, 10 years ago. It's in between being stable and having losses.

A

Dale Moore
L.A. Games, Inc.
Torrance, Calif.

My income is very definitely down from last year. Starting in January, the income from the street route is down an average of 20 percent per game. On the other hand, the total number of games on location has increased by 80 percent. The gross is up, but the average per game is down. Our arcade is, for a yearly average, down about five percent.

Why is my street route down? It's 100 percent attributable to the saturation of the home games. I have no doubt that it'll continue to be that way, unless one of two things happens. First, there would have to be some innovative technology changes, or second, we'd have to convince players to go to 50-cent coin play. I don't see either happening at least for one or two years.

We're going to have to live with these lower collections because the cause of the lowered collections, home games, won't soon be solved. The manufacturers are making too much money with them.

A

Gary Sanders
S&M Amusements
Gray, Tenn.

Things have been better for us than in 1987 or ever before; we're tickled to death. The only problem with the video part of it is the games don't last as long as they should. The crane part of the business has been doing very well.

I've been in business for about 10 years now. I expect 1989 to be an even better year than 1988, but after 1989 I feel it may be going back the other way. We'll just step back and watch how things turn out.

A

Richard Tolpin
Electro Play Services
Orlando, Fla.

Our gross revenues are up over last year by 25 percent. But this has more to do with our particular business than any general trend in the industry. Also, we're heavily influenced by the tourist business, being located in Orlando.

Most of our additional revenue has been created by our tourist locations, which utilize equipment not seen in the street route that we operate. Newness isn't as much a factor in these locations, so older pieces like *Sea Wolf* and shooting games do quite well. Pinballs and jukeboxes always do well, and videos seem to be stable as far as revenues are concerned. I have seen an increase in foosball; there seems to have been a resurgence.

Also, purchasing kits instead of dedicated pieces has had a lot to do with our success this past year. They're half the investment, and the revenues are just as good.

A

Marc Mandeltort
Marco Specialties
Columbia, S.C.

They're down or at best equal to 1987. The dedicated video market is definitely soft; kits are still the best band-aid for that. I'd like to blame home games as the cause for collections being down, but everyone seems to be doing that. They may even end up being a blessing for us.

A new display system would revitalize the industry, I think. Interchangeable cabinets are the wave of the future, like Japan does. It would also help to come up with new themes for video games; fighting games seem to have been overused. ☐

- IMPORTANT NOTICE -

DOUBLE DRAGON II: THE REVENGE

will be available exclusively through

AMERICAN TECHNOS, INC. and ROMSTAR, INC.

All purchases of this game must be made through
American Technos' and Romstar's authorized distributors

- BEWARE OF COPY GAMES -

Double Dragon II: The Revenge *will be available first in the U.S. and Canada. Until all sales and distribution have been completed. Upon completion of Sales and Distribution in the U.S. and Canada,* **Double Dragon II** *will be released in limited quantities in Europe.*

Anyone offering parallel boards of **Double Dragon II: The Revenge** *will more than likely be selling illegal and illegitimate copies, and will be prosecuted accordingly.*

American Technos and Romstar support the efforts of the AAMA and the FBI in its anti-drug campaign. The **"Winners Don't Use Drugs"** *message will appear in all* ***legitimate*** *versions of* **Double Dragon II: The Revenge.**

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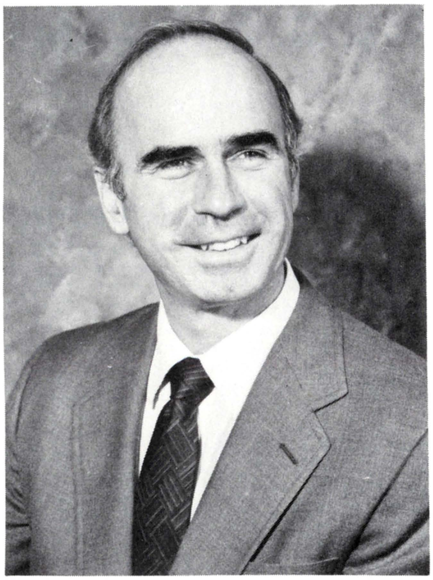
Knupp new AMOA president

Clyde F. Knupp, president of Amuse-O-Matic Co. in Fort Dodge, Iowa, officially took office as 1988-89 president of AMOA at its Expo '88, held in Chicago on Nov. 3-5. During the past year, Knupp served as AMOA first vice president. He was also chairman of AMOA's expo planning committee and AMOA's jukebox promotion committee.

Knupp was elected president at a spring 1988 meeting of the AMOA board, with his term officially starting on Nov. 5. He succeeds Walter G. ''Wally'' Bohrer, president of Hastings Distributing Co. in Milwaukee.

Other 1988-89 officers taking office were: Jack Kerner, president of Melo-Tone Vending Inc. in Somerville, Mass. (first vice president); James Trucano, Collins Music Co. in Greenville, S.C. (treasurer); and Eugene Urso, Madison Coin Machine Co. in Monona, Wis. (secretary).



Clyde Knupp

Also taking office were three AMOA vice presidents, each elected to three-year terms. They are: Phillip S. Benson, Montana Music Rentals in Missoula, Mont.; Tami Norberg-Paulsen, C&N Sales Co. in Mankato, Minn.; and Bob Porter, Hope Novelty & Vending in Hope, Ark.

Elected as directors to the board, also for three-year terms, were: Ed Schultz, Ed's Distributing in Lansing, Mich.; Bill Kraft, Shaffer Distributing in Columbus, Ohio; Russell Love, Royal Vending Services in Santa Fe Springs, Calif.; Manley Lawson, Lawson Music Co. in Winter Haven, Fla.; Larrianne Simon, Pride Enterprises in Huntsville, Ala.; Phil Elum, Elum Music Co. in Massillon, Ohio; Garland Garrett Jr., Cape Pear Music Co. in Wilmington, N.C.; David Goudeau, Gerald's Amusement Machines in Lafayette, La.; Michael Leonard, Coin-Op Specialists in Adrian, Mich.; and John Jordan, C&B Music and Vending in Lewiston, Idaho.

Ross Todaro of TAVS Inc. in Bryan, Texas was elected to fill a one-year board vacancy. In addition to four officers, AMOA has a total of nine vice presidents, 30 directors, and a Past Presidents' Council comprised of the five immediate past presidents.

The answer to copying problem?

American Technos Inc. and Romstar Inc. believe they've discovered a way to halt the pervasive problem of copied boards, and they're testing it out on *Double Dragon II: The Revenge*.

At a breakfast held during AMOA Expo '88, during which the sequel was unveiled, Romstar Vice President Rene Lopez said, ''This is an American release only; it is not being released in Japan. No one can cheat us on this game, because there will be no parallels to *Double Dragon II*. They would have to be copies.''

And, as further insurance, AAMA's Bob Fay announced that the game will be the first ever with a special FBI seal. If this seal, which has the message ''Winners Don't Use Drugs'' emblazoned on it, does not appear on the game, then it can be nothing other than a copy, Fay said.

''The FBI has given permission for the seal to be placed in manufacturers' flyers, too; it's definitely a positive step,'' Fay said. ''You've got to stay one step ahead of these people (copiers).''

Kordek named to Bally Midway post

Bally Midway has appointed Steve Kordek to the position of director of game design, a move it feels will strengthen its position in the pinball manufacturing industry.

''Steve brings a unique sensibility to the art of designing and manufacturing pinball machines,'' said Ken Fedesna, vice president and general manager for Williams Bally Midway. ''He has significantly contributed to resurrecting the pinball fortunes of Williams Electronics Games Inc. over the years by expertly guiding our group of designers, engineers, and programmers. We feel that he can have the same impact on Bally Midway's very capable and talented team.''

Steve Kordek

Kordek has been in the coin machine industry for over 50 years, beginning with Genco in 1937. ''It's going to be a new challenge, one that is very exciting to be working with the new designers from Bally Midway,'' he said. ''(We'll) utilize the resources available here to create products that will not just be viable but also successful.

''Our hope and goal is to incorporate the same level of Williams dependability, reliability, and quality in each and every Bally Midway machine. I know that we will be able to surprise a great many people with what we are currently planning.''

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Valley promotes Symmonds to manager

Richard B. Shelton, vice president of manufacturing for Valley Recreation Products Inc., announced the promotion of Susan M. Symmonds to manufacturing manager at its Sycamore, Ill., facility. Valley, headquartered in Bay City, Mich., is one of the world's largest producers of coin-op pool tables.

The Sycamore division holds the record for producing the greatest number of electronic dart games for the coin-op market. Symmonds formerly held the position of production manager and has been associated with Valley's Sycamore operations for nine years.

Susan Symmonds

Nintendo cited among world's best firms

Nintendo Company Ltd., the Japanese-based parent of Nintendo of America Inc., has been chosen one of the best global firms by Business Week magazine and as a top Japanese company by The Japan Economic Journal.

Business Week recognized Nintendo in an article entitled ''The Global 1000-The Leaders.'' The report, which examined companies in 21 countries, was compiled by Morgan Stanley & Co.'s Capital International Division; it involved 2,200 companies. Out of the ''Global 1000,'' Nintendo ranked number 321; it ranked number 142 among Japanese companies. The rankings were based on market value.

Meanwhile, The Japan Economic Journal rated Nintendo sixth among 1,760 Japanese companies. It ranked first among the top ten for both growth potential and company soundness. In addition, Nintendo scored a 96 on a 100-point scale measuring profitability.

Discount fares for ACME '89 available

Attendees of ACME '89 in Reno, to be held at Bally's Hotel on Feb. 23-25, will be able to select from specially discounted air fares available exclusively through American Airlines and Ardel Travel. As committee chairman Bill Cravens put it, ''The hardest part does not have to be getting there.''

There are two choices available: 45 percent off the regular round-trip coach fare, or five percent below any promotional fare in the market (non-refundables not included) plus two complimentary cocktails. The discounts are available by calling American Airlines at (800) 433-1790; ask for Star File #16262.

For ACME attendees who are not in the American Airlines routing area, Continental/Eastern offers 50 percent off regular round-trip coach fare and five percent off any promotional fare in the market. Call Continental/Eastern at (800) 468-7022; ask for EZ #2P38. Show sponsors Bob Fay (AAMA) and Carol Lally (Play Meter) urge attendees to book reservations early. The show runs from Thursday to Saturday.

Nintendo introduces bi-monthly magazine

In an effort to answer the needs of more than two million Nintendo players, Nintendo of America has launched a bi-monthly publication called *Nintendo Power*. Each four-color, glossy issue will contain approximately 100 pages of in-depth game reviews, game comparison ratings, sneak previews of upcoming Nintendo games, special Nintendo contests, and other information.

The magazine will replace *Fun Club News*; while Fun Club members can purchase a subscription for $15, the value is $21, as each issue carries a $3.50 cover price. Said Gail Tilden, director of publishing: ''*Nintendo Power* will appeal to a range of video game fans: from the dedicated, skilled Nintendo player, to beginning players, to the consumer who just wants to know more about our software. (It) will be the ultimate users' guide.''

Those interested in the magazine can call (800) 521-0900 for information.

Arcadia Systems bought by U.K. group

The Virgin Group, based in the United Kingdom, has purchased the Mastertronic group of companies, which includes subsidiary Arcadia Systems of Mountain View, Calif. The Virgin Group is a diversified entertainment group specializing in music, video, broadcasting, publishing, retailing, and property.

Its assets are valued in excess of $400 million; the record publishing division handles such artists as Steve Winwood, Phil Collins, and Ziggy Marley.

''This is an exciting period for us,'' said Justin Heber, Arcadia Systems' president. ''The interest and support Virgin has demonstrated in Arcadia indicates their long-term commitment to participate in the coin-op business.''

Taito opens European office

The Taito Corp. has established a European division with headquarters in London, according to an announcement made at the JAMMA show in October. It will be headed up by Grant Freerks, who worked in Taito's international sales division. He has been based in Tokyo for the past seven years.

''We see the world market divided into

FIFTEEN ◆ YEARS

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© Dynamo Corp., 1988 Air Hockey is a registered trademark of Brunswick Bowling & Billiard Corp three territories: the USA, Japan, and Europe,'' Freerks said. ''It is vital that we are in a position to effectively support all three, not just the United States and Japan. Our objective in Europe is to give more support and better service to the European community.''

Atari Games forms subsidiary

Atari Games Corp. has formed a new subsidiary company called Tengen Japan, which will design and develop consumer entertainment software for home game and computer systems, as well as coin-op video games. The company is an extension of the U.S.-based software company Tengen Inc.

Tengen Japan will be based in Tokyo and headed by President Kazuo Matsunaga. He has a wealth of experience in research and development for entertainment products, including his most recent engineering R&D efforts at Namco Ltd.

Thomas LaMore

LaMore joins Rowe International

Thomas F. LaMore has joined Rowe International as national sales manager for bill acceptors. He will manage the sale of bill acceptors to original equipment manufacturers and operators of vending and amusement machines.

Before joining Rowe, he worked for Mars Electronics as the northern division sales manager. LaMore has also been a manufacturer's representative for the Vendo Co.

RCA Records honors jukebox anniversary

RCA Records will incorporate a jukebox 100th anniversary logo on all seven-inch (45 rpm) promotional and commercial releases on its RCA, Jive, and Beggars Banquet labels. This is being done to commemorate the jukebox's 100th anniversary in 1989.

All 45s manufactured by RCA between November 1988 and December 1989 will include the logo, which was created by the AMOA. It features line drawings of the very first jukebox and a contemporary jukebox.

''We want to recognize the importance of the jukebox to the record industry over the years, and the 100th anniversary seemed an appropriate time,'' said Tony Montgomery, RCA's national director of singles sales.

Arachnid releases new product line

Arachnid has introduced its newest version of English Mark Darts, except this time there's a bit of a twist: Audio Darts for the visually handicapped player. This 4500 model speaks to the player, telling him when to shoot, what is hit with each dart, what the current score is, and when to remove the darts.

Audio Darts offers the games 301, 501, Count Up, and practice play to choose from. The instruction panel features a raised darthead map, a raised games list and select button, and a raised diagram of a section.

The game was designed in conjunction with Braille Sports Foundation, which will market the game. The organization is run by John Ross, who has been blind since birth. It has successfully marketed Beep Baseball for the visually impaired. For more information, call Arachnid at (800) 435-8319 or (815) 654-0212.

Data East promotes Musci

Ray Musci has been named senior vice president/general manager of Data East USA's coin-op division, according to President Robert Lloyd. ''Our coin-op division is the oldest and most important part of our company, and it therefore was appropriate that we put the day-to-day running in one person's hands,'' Lloyd said.

''Ray has an extremely diverse background in our business at the operator, distributor and manufacturing level. He has an excellent rapport with the other managers of the group. We feel very confident that his appointment will strengthen our ability to remain a major factor in the coin-op business.''

Ray Musci

G&K Systems enters CD jukebox field

G&K Systems Inc., a newly-formed company based in Fontana, Calif., is planning to introduce two CD jukebox models in the summer of 1989. Each will offer

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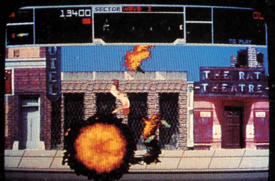
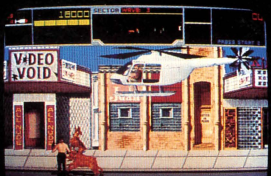
NARC brings to life sensational, digitized graphics that are a technological leap ahead. The impact will be to help redefine the state-of-the-art for coin-operated amusement game entertainment . . . and for collections everywhere!

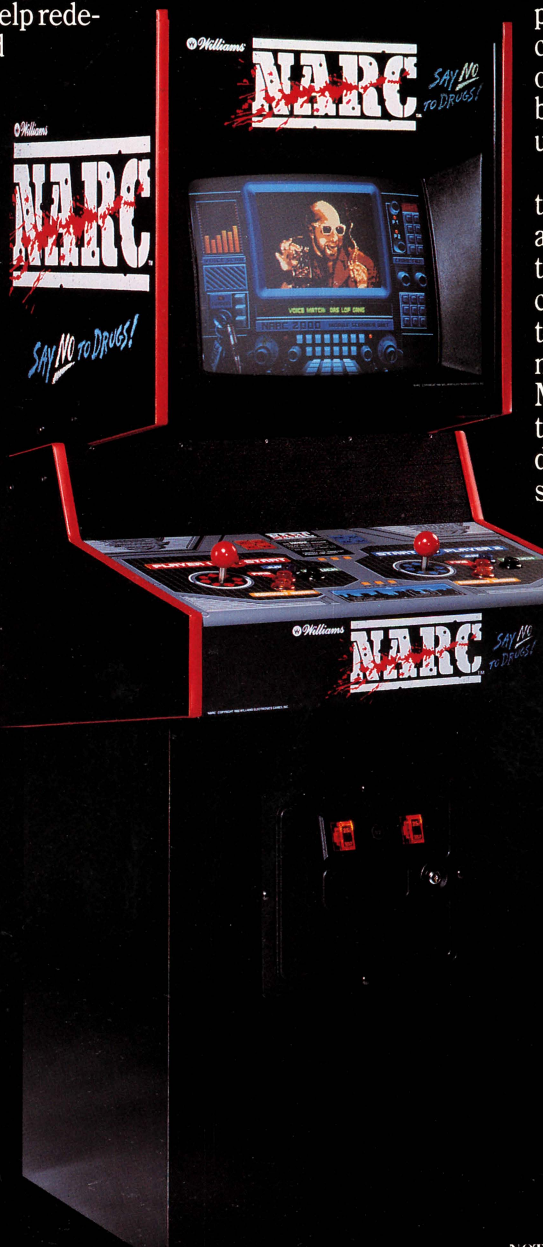
With NARC, Williams explodes back onto the video scene offering the kind of breakthrough game that's going to dramatically change video — its looks, its play appeal and its profit potential — forever!



Only Williams had the guts to bring you such highly articulated and detailed screen action in one machine. It's what players have been looking for in a truly unique video game experience that will command attention, create excitement and generate blockbuster earnings. It's Williams' new custom patented in-house hardware and software system that makes the difference between watching a storyline unfold . . . and living it!

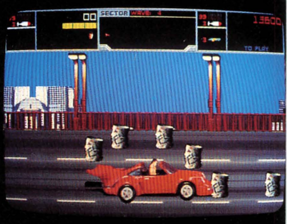


The glory of NARC is the way it allows the genius of Williams' engineers to bring their imagination and creativity to the screen. With a solid theme to attract players, the elite team of Max Force and Hit Man are on a mission to destroy the K.R.A.K. criminal syndicate and protect the innocent. Junkies, punks, thieves, psychos and murderers must all face the elite team's special brand of justice.



Armed with machine guns and rocket bombs, the ability to cruise through the city streets in a high-powered sports car, or fly overhead in a specially equipped helicopter, and aided by the on-screen scanner, the elite team must bust or kill the low life that rules the underworld.

The non-stop action takes players through ghetto streets, downtown, inside abandoned warehouses, across bridges to the ultimate showdown at the corporate crime headquarters against the master villain, Mr. Big. Along the way, there are drugs and loot to seize as evidence for bonus points as wave after wave unfolds.



Innovative technology. At the heart of the system is TI's 34010 graphics signal processor and Williams' own custom integrated circuit that enables the player to experience this true-to-life adventure and ensures copy protection. Original music, speech and dazzling effects. New cabinetry with a larger control panel for 2-person cooperative play. It's all there and more in NARC . . . the one video game that only Williams had the *guts* to make.

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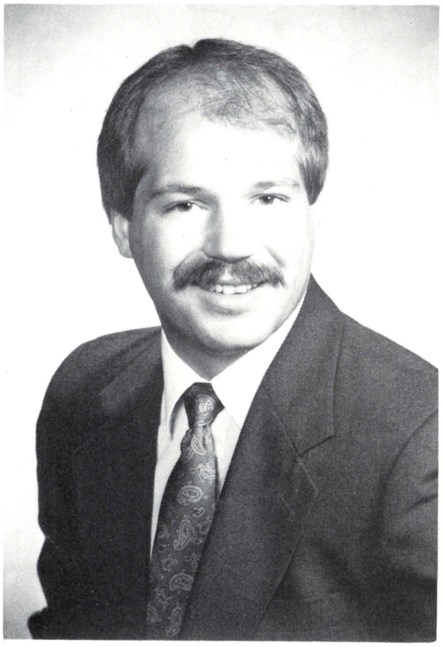
many advanced features: programmability, automatic or random selections, memory, and the ability to load and play any song on any CD.

The CD 500A, which will be marketed for homes or small businesses, offers a load time of under 10 seconds and capacity for 500 CDs or 5,000 songs (10 songs per CD). The CD 1000A will feature a capacity of 1,000 CDs or 10,000 songs; it will be marketed for professional use.

Users of the CD 1000A will be able to select artist, title, year, and song category from a full-screen display that's listed alphabetically. Selection keys will provide full-use operation. The load time for this model is also under 10 seconds. Warranty on both models will be 12 months.

For more information, contact Greg King, G&K Systems Inc., 15664 Slover Ave., Fontana, CA 92335; (714) 355-4496.



Jeff Bauman

Bauman, Mayhew join Veryfine Juice team

New England Apple Products Co., makers of Veryfine Juice Products, have added two new sales managers: Jeff Bauman and Jeffrey Mayhew.

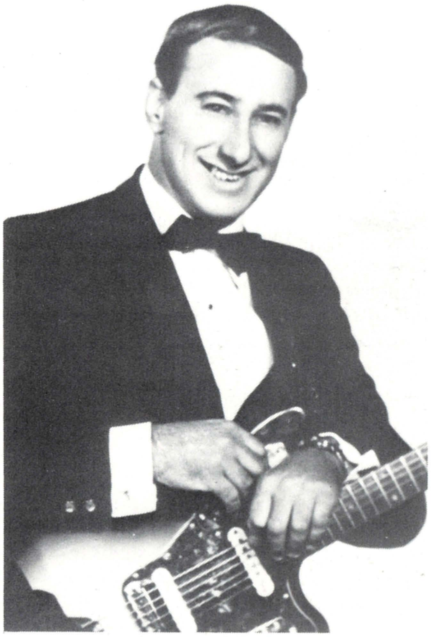
Bauman has been named North Central Territory sales manager in the vending division; he will be responsible for vending sales efforts in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Northern Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota. Bauman worked most recently for Coin Acceptors Inc.

Mayhew is the new Midwest Territory sales manager in the vending division. He is responsible for vending sales efforts and will call on vending equipment distributors, as well as vending and coffee service operators. Mayhew's territory encompasses Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Eastern Kentucky, Western New York and Western Pennsylvania. He worked most recently for VSA in Greensboro, N.C.

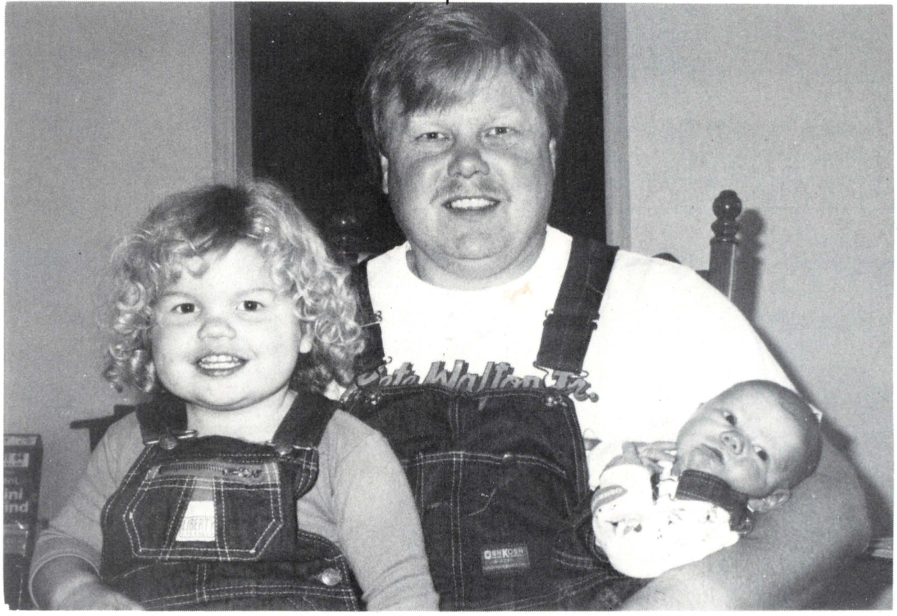
Jeffrey Mayhew

Man searching for lost coin-op father

Ronald Ford of Gaffney, S.C., adopted as an infant in 1941, is looking for his natural father. He believes those of us in the coin-op industry can help, as his father worked on "nickelodeons" many years ago. The father's name is Leo *Grossbart, Gobart* or a name with a sound close to that.



Ronald Ford

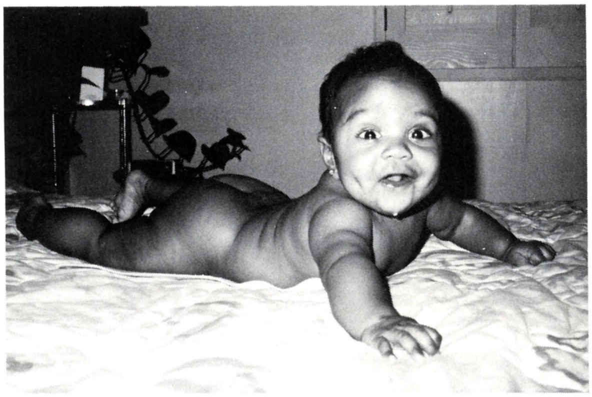


Pete Walton Jr.

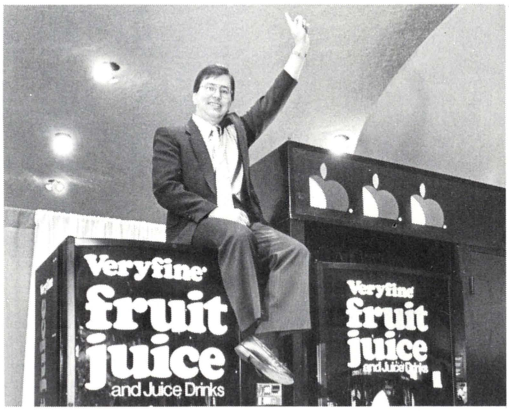
Nintendo's Pete Walton proudly shows off his three-year-old daughter, Andrea Lea, and the newest member of his family: Peter Anthony, born October 6 weighing seven-and-a-half pounds. Pete and his wife, Sherri Andree, had their own special attraction right before the AMOA Expo.

He was employed by Charles and Barbara Stein of Savannah, Ga., from 1939-1946 at Atlantic Coast Novelty and Amusement Co. before going to New York City. Ronald, now 47, was very ill as an infant, perhaps leading his natural father to think that he died.

The photo is of Ford when he was 36 years old; it is hoped that it resembles Ford's father at that age, which may jog the memory of those who knew him at the time. Anyone with information can call Ford collect at (803) 487-4746, or write him at P.O. Box 292, Gaffney, S.C. 29342. □



We almost don't have to put a cutline on this baby picture since the face is familiar in the industry already. This is the daughter of Romstar's Tim Jackson. Little Crystal is already flashing Dad's famous dimples and personality.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Veryfine
fruit juice
and Juice Drinks

Dennis Dakin, Veryfine's vice president of vending sales, sits atop the company's new rounded vending machine recently displayed at the NAMA convention in New Orleans. He definitely feels his company is number one!

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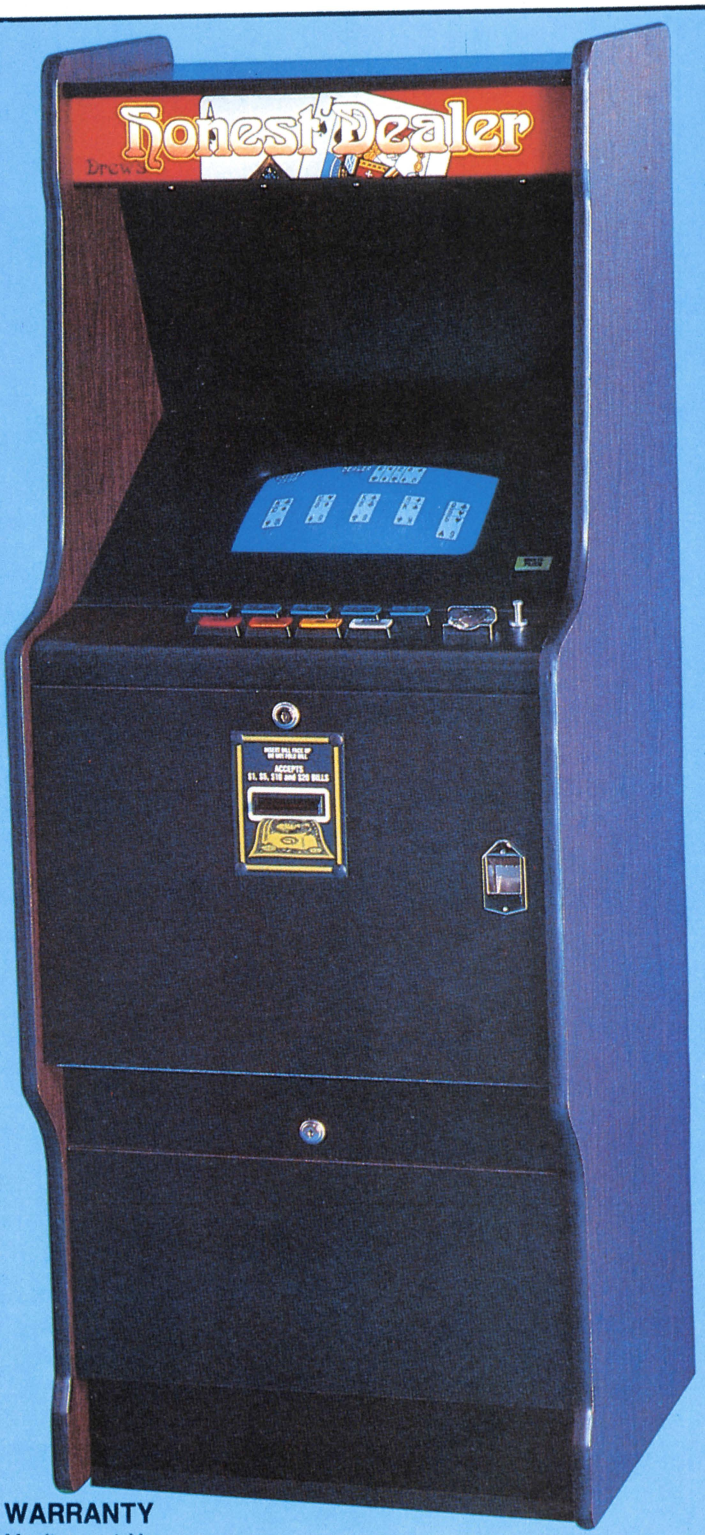

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Amusement Only — The operation of these games and the features therein may be subject to various state and local laws or regulations. It is not intended herein to solicit the sale of such games in any jurisdiction wherein the same may not be lawfully sold or operated.

STATE UPDATE

BRITISH COLUMBIA (CANADA)

A move to open Vancouver, B.C., video arcades to children under 18 has been halted by a city council committee. Vancouver city staff had argued that the bylaw banning these kids might be unconstitutional.

City lawyer Terry Bland proposed an amendment that would keep those under 16 out of the arcades during school hours and after 9 p.m., but it failed. ''Just leave the bylaw as is and get rid of the subversive person on your staff,'' said Alderman George Puil. Police have contended that the arcades are havens for drug dealers and other criminals.

ILLINOIS

An arcade owner in Lombard is asking the village to review license fees for video games, which he claims are the highest in the state. Gary Isner, owner of Enchanted Castle, says Lombard's annual fees of $1,500 per video machine are much higher than his competitors in Darien, Downers Grove, and Naperville.

He said that reducing the fees would make it easier to expand his business to 100 machines from the 57 he now operates. This, however, would require revising a village ordinance that caps the number of machines at 65 per establishment.

The Village Board will study fees for arcade video games in other municipalities before taking action on the matter.

NEW JERSEY

A Woodbridge businessman's attempts to legalize amusement games offering merchandise prizes has failed. The proposal would have required the approval of voters in a township-wide referendum.

''I'm glad to hear it's been dropped,'' said Mayor John Warren. ''Evidently, they got the feel of the community, that it wouldn't be welcome in town. Bringing a cheap kind of honky-tonk atmosphere is not wanted.''

Bruce Kawut, president of Bruce Amusements, had begun a petition drive in July; he needed 570 of them to get the referendum on a Nov. 8 ballot. They were not received by the legal deadline. The same referendum was voted down in the township in 1985 by a near 2-1 margin.

PENNSYLVANIA

Player's Choice video game arcade in Phoenixville, after being open for only four months, is coming under fire from neighboring merchants who allege the arcade is hurting their businesses. The complaints are primarily about fights, trash, and bicycles strewn in front of the building.

Arcade manager Scott King says he cleans up the trash outside every morning after the arcade opens at 10 a.m. Most of the trash is left behind by trashmen emptying garbage cans, he believes. ''Whoever dumps the cans does it very poorly,'' King said.

Doug Gable, owner of Gable's Flower Shoppe next to the arcade, said his biggest complaint is the trash and a recurring series of fisticuffs. He says he's called the police as much as three times in one day about fights that break out in front of Player's Choice. ''I'm not doing the walk-in business I used to,'' Gable said.

Player's Choice owner Victor Navon, who opened the arcade on July 15, says he's heard no such complaints. As to the complaint about bikes, he said: ''The town is aware of the problem. Maybe they will buy a bike rack.'' The Phoenixville Area Business Association has not decided on any possible action concerning Player's Choice.

SOUTH DAKOTA

The South Dakota Lottery Commission plans to ask the next state legislature for permission to explore possible partners in a lotto, as well as authority to operate video lottery games, according to Susan Walker, executive director of the lottery.

''If we're allowed to study a multistate arrangement, the best approach is to work with other states that don't offer lotto,'' she said. ''And the most desirable for us would be Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming.'' The three states are nearby and have similar populations.

In video lottery, players use video machines to play blackjack or poker against a computer. Industry research shows that it could produce $15 to $20 million for the state. A lotto would start smaller, bringing in about $1.5 to $2 million in the beginning and then growing.

WISCONSIN

The Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO) board of directors has recommended a change to the bylaws, one that will be probably be submitted for approval by the membership at its annual meeting next May. The change would alter the current membership policy and require that an operator have no less than 25 amusement devices on location. There are presently no minimum machine requirements.

Further, an applicant would be required to have the endorsement of no less than two bona fide members of WAMO. The endorsements would have to be in writing and accompany a member application. A two-thirds vote of the board would be needed for acceptance of these measures.

The proposed changes were prompted after several tavern locations indicated an interest in securing WAMO membership, primarily to achieve sanctioning for their electronic dart players. The board feels that location owners are not operators and therefore should not be allowed membership in the state association.

In other WAMO news, the board has agreed to promote passage of state legislation that would legalize ''video games of chance'' in Wisconsin. Lobbyist Tom Coenen has been brought in on a separate retainer to advocate passage of this legislation.

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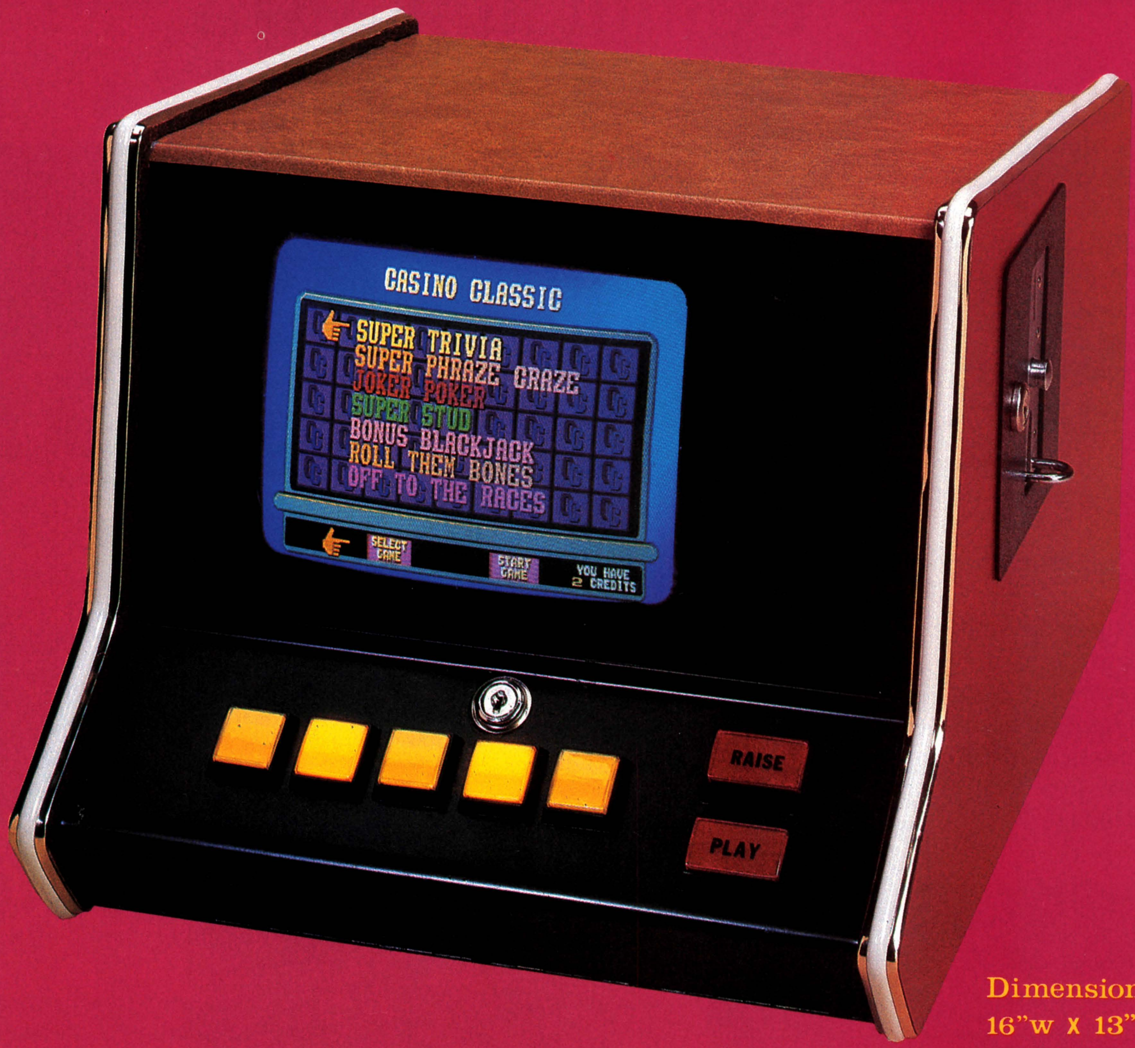
• IN A CLASS OF ITS OWN •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Vending leaders exhibit at NAMA

Operators and distributors filled The Rivergate in New Orleans for the National Automatic Merchandising Association's (NAMA) 42nd Annual Convention and Exhibit held October 20-23. Over 235 major manufacturers and suppliers exhibited their products.

Understandably, food and beverage items dominated the exhibit floor along with glass-front vending machines, cold and hot drink machines, cigarette machines, security devices, and coin counting and sorting equipment. There were coffee venders that grind beans to order before coffee is brewed, videotape vending units that accept debit cards as well as coins and cash, and many microwaveable items.

Of particular interest were the french fry vending units, one from Prize Frize and another from Ore-Ida. The Prize Frize machine utilized dehydrated potatoes and the Ore-Ida one used frozen potatoes. Both machines cooked the spuds in fresh, hot oil.

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100% apple juice

Ready to sample Veryfine juice by New England Apple Products (l to r): Jim Geraci of New England, Patrick Harper of J&J Distributors, and Danny Buchanan of DL Vender.

hot
Ice Cream Sandwich
COFFEE
COFFEE
TEA

Bob and Donna LeBlanc admire Rowe's latest all-purpose glass front snack and sundry vending machine.

Business and educational sessions covered every subject of major importance to the vending industry, from the dollar coin to cigarette marketing and vending machine trends to stress management. The keynote speaker, Charles Kurault of CBS News, drew an expected crowd on the opening day.

NAMA officer elections were held during the four-day event. John Farquharson, president of ARASERVE, a division of ARA Services, Inc. was elected chairman of the board. His one-year term begins on January 1, 1989. Other new officers are: Harold Blotner of Dane County Vending, senior vice president; J. Stephen Stoltz of Polyvend, vice chairman; and R. David Clayton of Automatic Food Service, treasurer.

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Mayoni's Isaac Ben-Yehuda (l) and Oscar Robbins get ready for guests at their booth and an opportunity to display their line of countertops.

Elected to the NAMA board of directors for three-year terms were: Paul Duffy of Canteen Corp., John Gross of Automatic Products Co., Ladd Little of L.C. Vending Co., and Jack E. Thomas, Jr. of Coin Acceptors, Inc.

Several NAMA directors were re-elected for a three-year term including Blotner, Richard Hartman of Greyhound Food Management, Inc., Larry Levine of Woburn Vending Co., and William Tobin of Nabisco Foods Co. Elected to one-year terms on the board were Allen Kendell of Kwik Vending Service and Sid Rudin of Coffee Inn's, a division of Automatic Marketing Industries, Inc.

The Ladies' Program included visits to the nearby NASA Michoud aerospace facility, a tour of New Orleans' famous Audubon Zoo, and a luncheon. The banquet and floor show on Saturday night capped another successful NAMA program. □

Prize Frize
fresh hot fries
NAMA

At the Prize Frize booth (l to r): Robert Pledger of Ashford Vending, Joyce and Bill Bartfield and Pamela and Steven Price of Prize Frize, a french fry vender.

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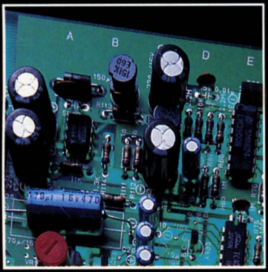
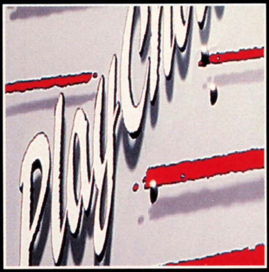


The new PlayChoice Kit™ fits right into your Nintendo VS. UniSystem® giving you the power to pull in more profits than ever. In fact, the new software for the PlayChoice Kit™ is twice as powerful. So the graphics have more grab. The colors have more pop. Punches have more pow. And players have more long-playing fun and games.

ACTION PLAN



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[1]™ Tradewest, Inc., [2]™ Konami, Inc., [3]™ & © 1987 Atari Games Corp., ©1986, 1987 Namco, [4]® © 1985 Atari Games Corp., [5] © 1987 Square Co., Ltd., [6] © 1984 Irem Corp., [7] © 1987 Rare, Ltd., [8]™ Konami, Inc. All titles are subject to location testing.

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Dave Waller (c) and Jim Frye (r) of Brady Distributing confer with David Johnson (l) of Venex, Inc.

Ron Carrera of Betson Pacific and Tim Paukner of Birmingham Vending talk shop at the Rowe exhibit.

Debbie Forgione of Boyer Bros. welcomes Jim Mason of High Country Games.

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Laura Speidel of Video View demonstrates the International Video Dispensing Machine for David Sands of Five Star Vending and Coffee Services.

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Marlboro's booth featured Sega's driving game *Out Run*.

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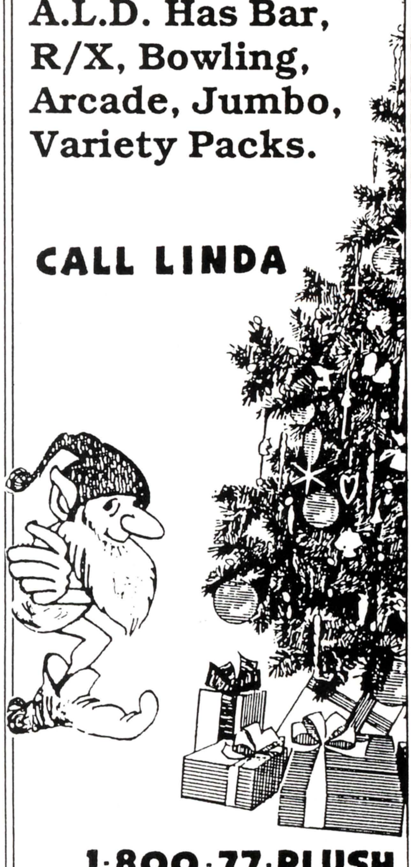

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LAMOA meets to discuss common concerns

Operators in Louisiana, like operators in other states, have strong concerns about the future of the industry in their state. These concerns brought together members of the Louisiana Amusement and Music Operators Association (LAMOA) for a day of meetings in New Orleans on October 22.

Since very few operators attended, apathy was a subject of discussion. ''It just makes me mad that there are operators in our state that just don't give a damn about supporting the association,'' grumbled one operator.

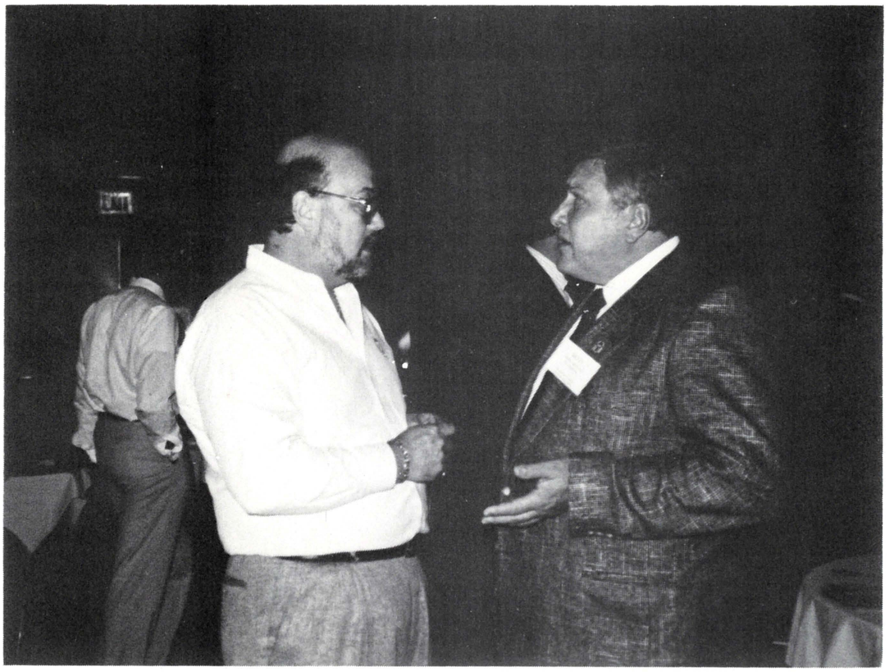
''We all have businesses to run, but we manage to find the time to work with the association, so there is no excuse for operators to say they just don't have the time,'' agreed another concerned operator.

Louisiana is battling higher license fees imposed by the various cities and needs operator participation desperately. Those attending the meeting each agreed to try and get one new member.

Wally Bohrer addressed the group on the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) programs and accomplishments. The topics included insurance (amusement operators now have their own category, removed from the higher vending category for liability insurance), government relations, the coin coalition, cigarette vending, the Wayne Hesch Foundation, and the Truth in Amusement Committee.

AMOA is trying to follow Montana's lead in having video poker games declared legal. AMOA has written sample legislation for states to use. Bohrer mentioned that the state of Montana received over $12 million in revenue from Keno games.

Bohrer also participated with AAMA board member Steve Koenigsberg of State Sales in Baltimore and Frank Gumma of American Vending in Chicago in a panel discussion on parallel boards. Beginning



Wally Bohrer (r) and Bill Cravens confer after the LAMOA meetings.

David Goudeau, president of LAMOA, addresses the group.

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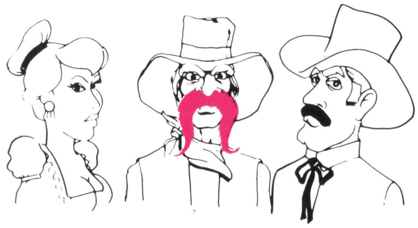

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Frank Gumma at the podium; Steve Koenigsberg seated.

with the question, ''What is the meaning of the Red Baron/Taito decision?,'' Bohrer answered that it would be a precedent for other cases.

Koenigsberg responded that it was a narrow ruling that will be open for further interpretation. Gumma cautioned operators about buying boards and explained that most were probably counterfeit, not parallel.

Operators asked numerous questions and Bill Cravens of Capcom, who was in the audience, was called upon several times to clarify certain points. Bill was understandably shaken when he heard some of the misconceptions about the issue. ''It scares me to think that most operators don't have all the facts about true parallels.''

He continued, ''There are so few true parallels being sold here. Most are copies and those are illegal.''☐

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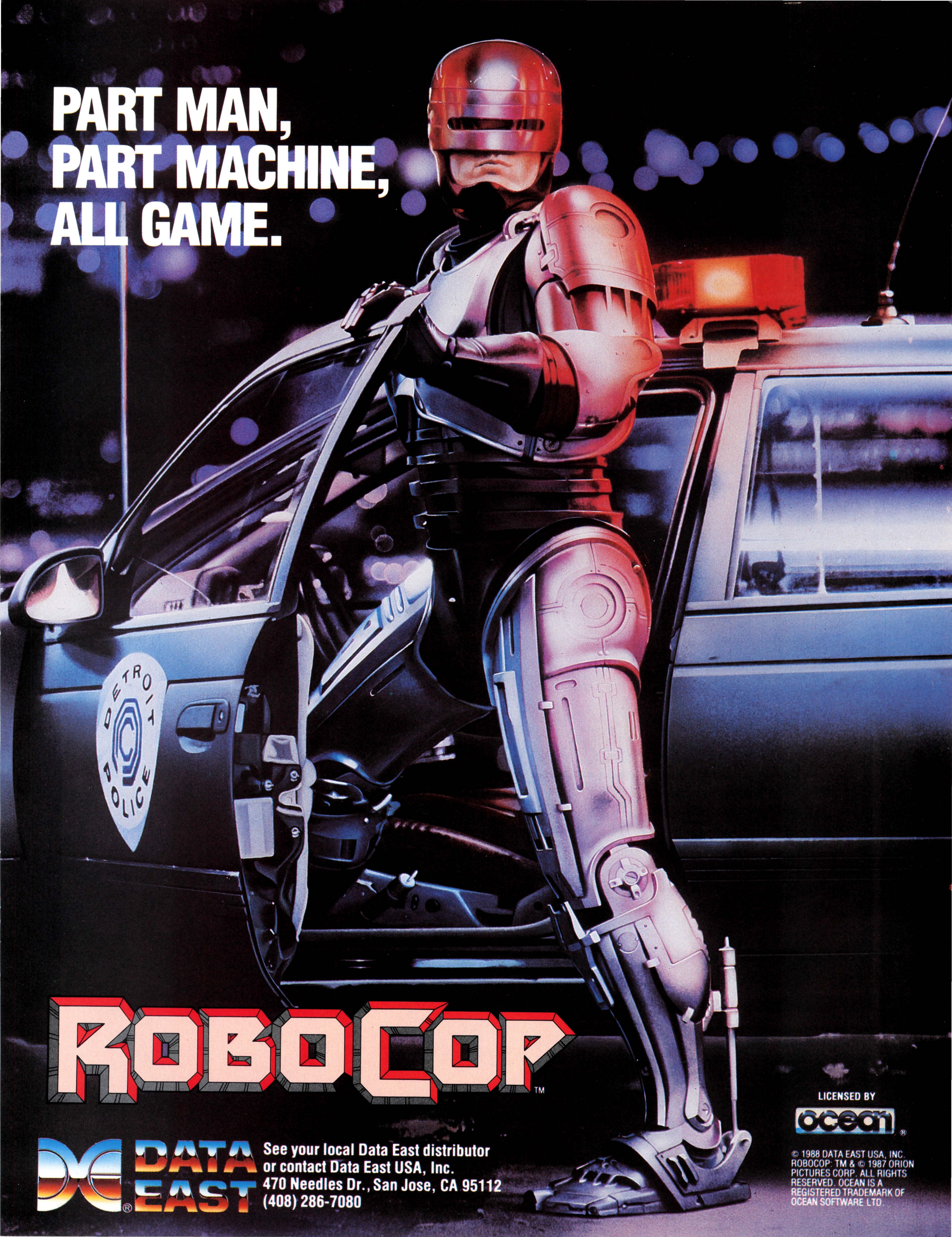
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Leland Corp. can boast that it's the one and only company relying on American ingenuity as the foundation for the success of the company. The product Leland has introduced has been impressive. *Quarterback*, for example, has consistently been a top-earner. Here's a pictorial walk with Leland on designing a game from beginning to finished product.

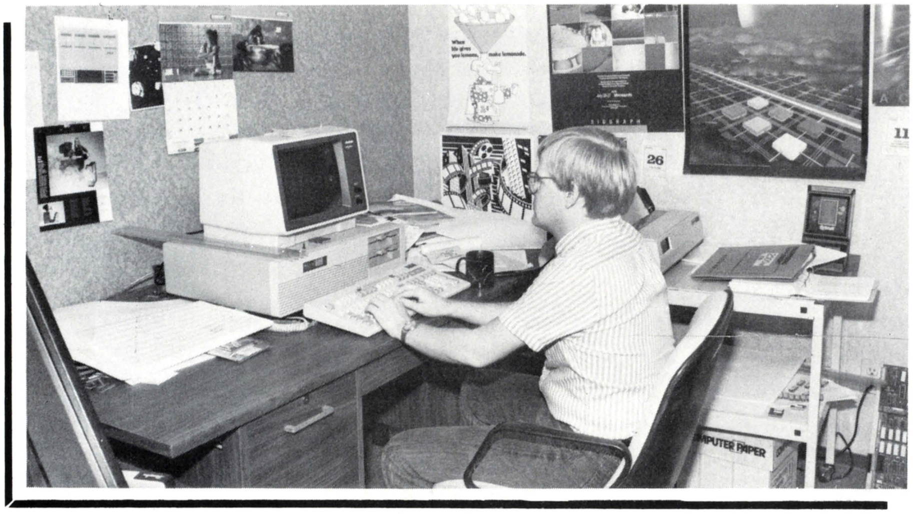
Leland begins with a research and development game concept meeting where the game story boards and game ideas are discussed in detail. Teams made up of artists, programmers, hardware engineers, and sound engineers are decided on. Since Leland works on two or three games at a time, there may be as many as four teams each working on a different game.☐

PROJECT
PROGRAM
ART
SCHEDULE
SEASON
DEVELOPMENT
PERSONNEL
PROGRAMMERS
ARTISTS

The heart of the game matures at the research and development game concept meeting. Here, amid chalk boards of ideas, initial drawings, and game materials on the conference table, the team begins to bring all the elements together.

Once the game direction has been established, art development begins. All art starts on paper, then is re-drawn on a computer work station. Leland's Kevin Lydy begins the tedious process of bringing game background art to life.

The programming team meets to decide the best approach for the game play. Medo Moreno (c) talks with the programmers about their various responsibilities on this level of game design.



Programmer Mike Enright starts on a new game. There may be as many as four teams working on different games at one time. Teams include artists, programmers, and hardware and sound engineers.

The sound and music department carefully looks for the perfect sounds to suit the game. Phil Sorger, Sam Powell (c), and Bob Skinner listen to background music and sound effects.

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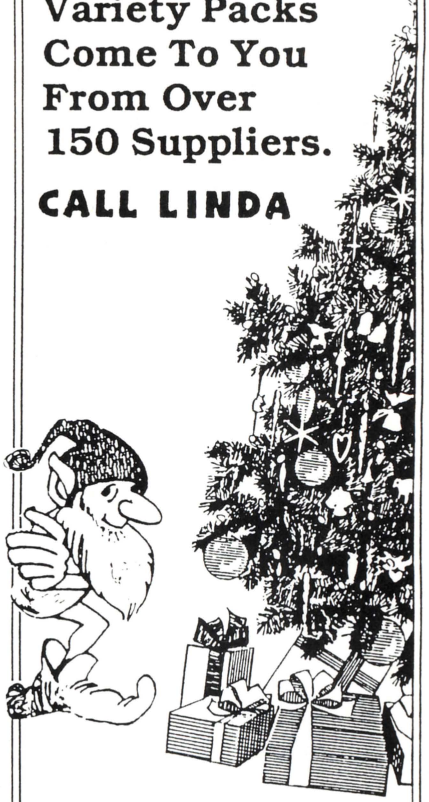

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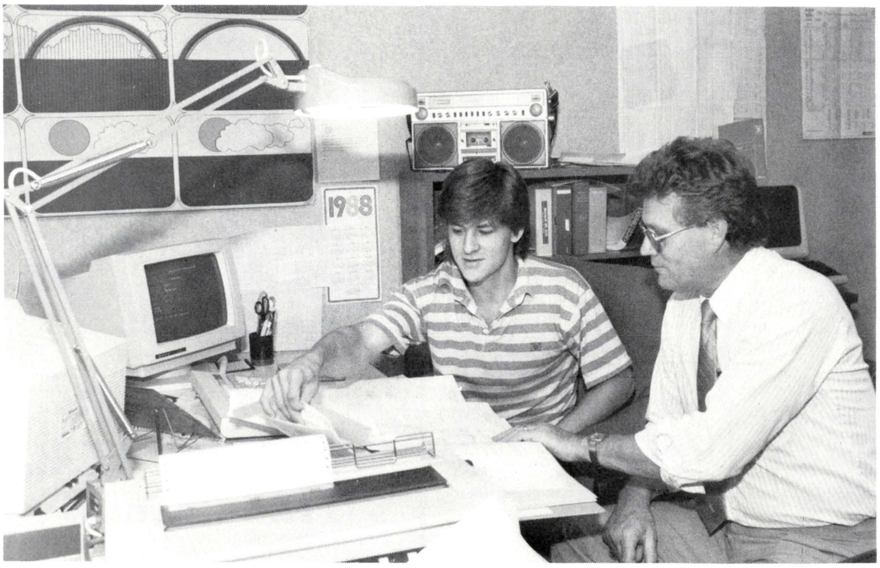
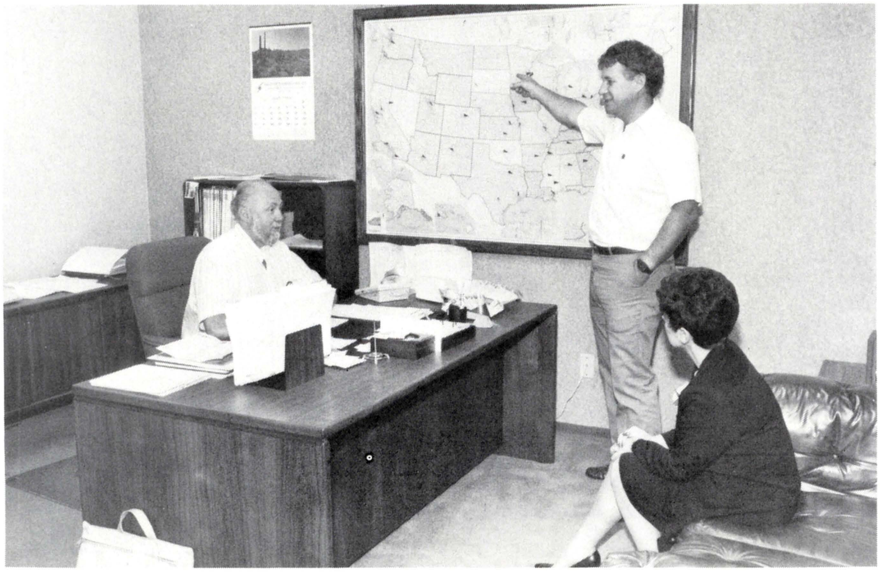


Dave Dodd, vice president of manufacturing, discusses engineering tasks and support with Eric Henderson.

While the game is being developed, the mechanical drawings on cabinet design are made. Dave Scott in the drafting department puts his ideas down on paper; he also helps build cabinet prototypes.



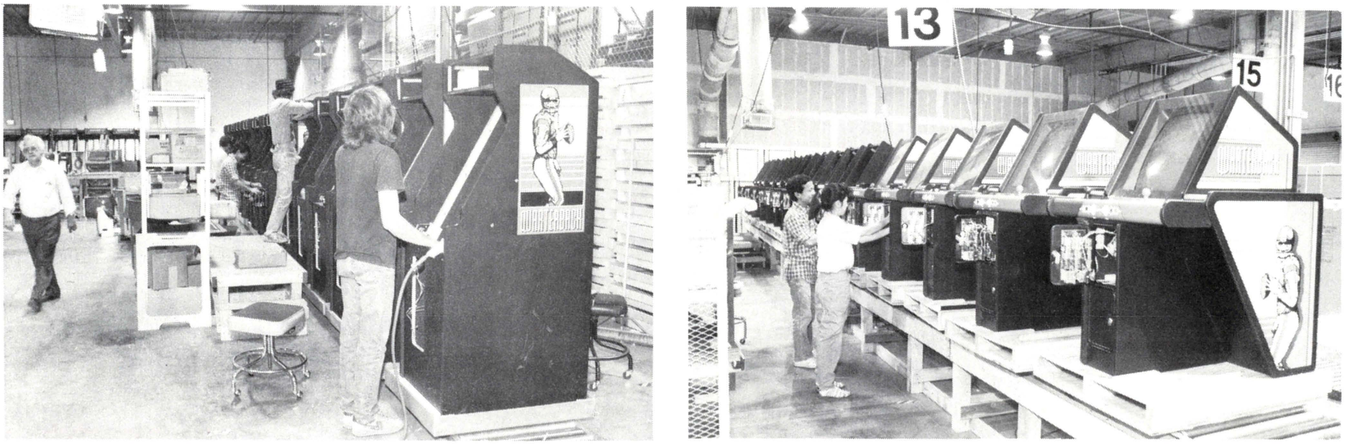
In marketing, Ken Anderson (l), Dennis Sable, and Debbie Austin plan the approach for market testing.

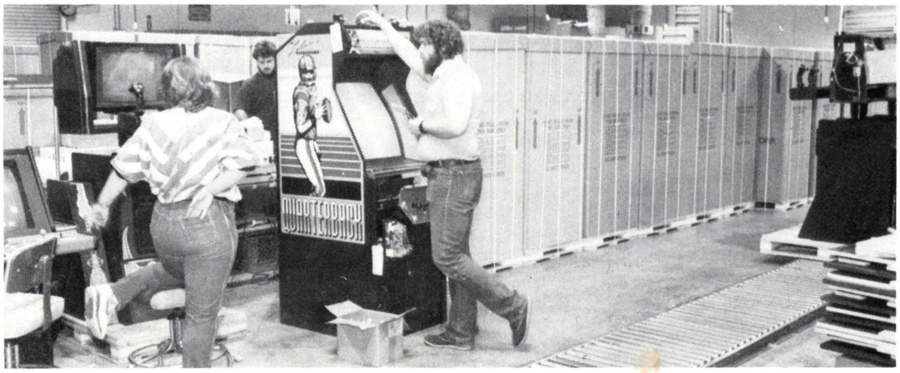
Dennis Sable is in charge of game manual production. The company knows that detailed manuals are important to operators.

Once the game is ready for production the electronic assembly department gears up. Game boards are assembled here and the programming of game RAMS and ROMS is also completed.

Now it's time for sub-assembly. Here the control panels, joysticks, power supply units, and other elements are put together.

These two photos show the final assembly.





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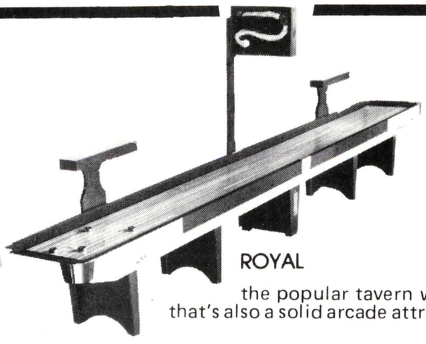

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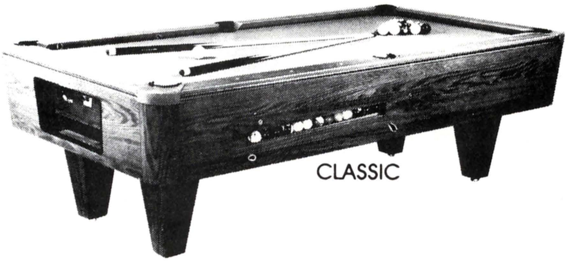

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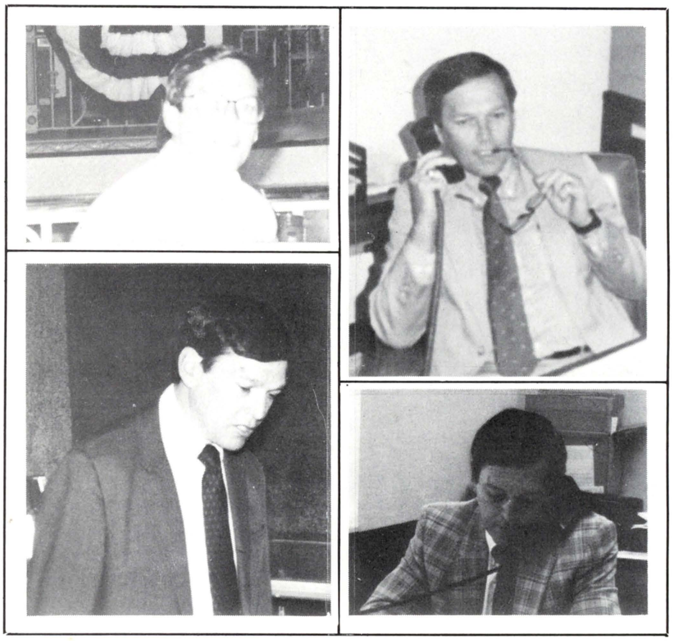
COINMAN INTERVIEW

Dick Adams

by Christopher Caire



Unlike many of his colleagues in the coin-op industry with decades of experience under their collective belts, Dick Adams is a relative newcomer. His career began in the field of accounting, working as a controller-treasurer for a manufacturing company. Dick's diverse resume also includes stints as a stockbroker and banker.

In 1977, Adams' close friend Herb Skinner started an arcade business called Barrel of Fun as a ''sideline venture.'' With the Savannah, Georgia-based business experiencing rapid growth, Skinner asked Dick to come aboard and run it on a full-time basis. He agreed, leaving a position as executive vice president of a savings and loan association.

Dick was president and CEO of Barrel of Fun from 1981 until its acquisition by Atari in September 1987. Barrel of Fun had grown to approximately 21 locations in the Southeast before its acquisition and name change to Atari Operations. We figured this would be a good topic to begin with.

What are the advantages of being owned by a manufacturer?

There aren't any, other than our getting a little advance knowledge about some equipment. Also, we get to test some of our own equipment being developed. But other than that, there really aren't any advantages of being owned by a manufacturer.

Do you think the name Atari helps secure locations better than the name Barrel of Fun by itself?

Barrel of Fun, of course, had an excellent reputation in the leasing community and was well-known. But in my opinion, the name Atari is still magical and synonymous with the video industry and the video business in the eyes of the public. Therefore, it is a very definite positive. Leasing agents are always receptive to lease locations to brand names rather than ''independents.''

Have there been any differences in the day-to-day operations now that Atari's taken over?

No, there really haven't. There's been no changes in store operations except for necessary reporting to the home office, which I think one would expect. We're now known as Atari Expo; that's the name we're going under in developing the new arcades. Atari Operations is the name of the corporation, and we will use the trade name Atari Expo for the stores' name.

There has been a lot of talk about manufacturers buying up all of the good locations. How do you feel about that?

I don't think the talk has any substance to it at all. Most of our locations are in regional malls, where the competition for space is fierce and intense. There are several companies that are known as national operators; some of them are owned by manufacturers like ourselves, and some are independently owned. They're all vying for these spaces.

At the most recent ICSC leasing convention, I had several leasing agents tell me that I was the sixth or seventh ''game room operator'' that they had appointments with. New deals for good locations, and I'm speaking about arcade locations in malls, are usually made because of the company's good reputation for designing and operating amusement centers or because of the previous relationship the operator has with the developer or leasing agent. Then sometimes it just gets down to who wants to make the highest bid.

But if you're referring to route locations, the game distributors are more involved in buying and running route operations than are any of the manufacturers.

Do you feel there is a rift between manufacturers and operators, and if so why? If there isn't, why is there this myth of distrust between the two segments of the industry?

It seems to me that ever since I've been in the business, there's been this so-called ''rift'' going on. First the operators complained that they couldn't get products fast enough in the boom years. Later on, they said the manufacturers were producing too much product and a lot of poor games were being pushed on them. Then, a couple of years later the cry was they sold us system

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games and never supported the market with decent software. Kit prices, discounts, and close-outs all add to their complaints with the manufacturers.

The manufacturers counter with their complaints about operators that use knock-off switches and parallel games, as well as operators that cancel after they've made bona fide orders. They also complain that the operator's loyalty is only as long as the last good game that they've produced.

I suppose this rift will continue as long as manufacturers are in the business of making and selling equipment to achieve the best profit possible, and operators are in the business to purchase equipment as cheaply as possible and operated it to get the best return on their investment. But I hope that in the future each will be a little more receptive to the other's complaints, because neither of us can live without the other.

Do you feel that you're not as well-received at industry events because you are viewed more as a manufacturer now?

No, I've seen no difference whatsoever. In all of the meetings that I go to, I'm still referred to as an operator and known as an operator.

> *''Properly supervised arcades are no more a threat to improper behavior than movie houses, skating rinks, or other places where there's a large number of young people.''*

Does Atari determine what kind of equipment you're going to have? How much do they influence your decision-making?

We work strictly off of a budget for equipment purchases at Atari Operations. We make all of our own decisions on the equipment purchase without any involvement from Atari Games.

Do you think operators are more likely to take a chance on games from a big-name company?

Yes, I think they'd be more likely to buy the game if the recent track record of the manufacturer has been good. But if the previous games have been poor, I don't think it'll make any difference who makes the game.

Now that you are owned by Atari, do you think you will be expanding more rapidly than you would've as an individually-owned company?

Selling to Atari, from a personal standpoint, I feel I got the best of both worlds. I got a little bit of money from my equity in Barrel of Fun, and I've been allowed to continue doing the same job that I love for Atari Games. Kind of paraphrasing an old Internal Revenue Service axiom: I got my cake but got to eat it too.

There are also great advantages to the 125 or so Barrel of Fun employees. We can really be a lot more aggressive now in our growth plans because we have less financial and geographical restraints. This will translate to a lot more opportunities for our people. We can also now consider larger projects, such as our new joint venture in Orlando with Commander Ragtimes. This is in a 14,000 square-foot, circus-type atmosphere. We would've never been able to consider that kind of venture as Barrel of Fun.

There have been quite a few more arcade pieces introduced lately. Do you think this may indicate a revival of the arcade industry?

Well, I thought we had revived a long time ago, or else we would've never been able to sell Barrel of Fun in 1987. I feel the arcade industry is alive and well.

Since there is a renewed interest, do you think we'll see an influx of people opening arcades that have no experience, like what happened during the boom days?

No, I do not; at least I hope not. Many of the distributors, and others who arranged credit for some of the people who had gotten into the business in the early 1980s, hopefully have learned their lesson and will not extend a lot of credit to these individuals. Most of those people got badly burned because of all the defaults on equipment notes. I think it will be more difficult for new entrants to get into the business because they will certainly need to be much better financed than they were in 1980 and 1981.

> *''We are dependent upon our manufacturers to produce good equipment so our businesses can stay healthy.''*

Do you think the restrictions on arcades have been unfair?

In many localities it's very unfair. We've found, particularly in the California area, they've gone so far as to prohibit arcades. I feel that properly supervised arcades are no more a threat to improper behavior than movie houses, skating rinks, or other places where there's a large congregation of young people.

What makes a good arcade location?

Well, there are three factors in the real estate business: location, location, and location. A good arcade sight depends on the controlled amount of traffic that will be coming by the door, which is why our policy has been to locate primarily in regional malls. There you have a good deal of traffic coming to the mall for various reasons.

Locations outside of mall sites make you a point of destination rather than one of the various tenants of a mall. In our opinion, good locations depend on much more traffic than can be brought in as a point of destination.

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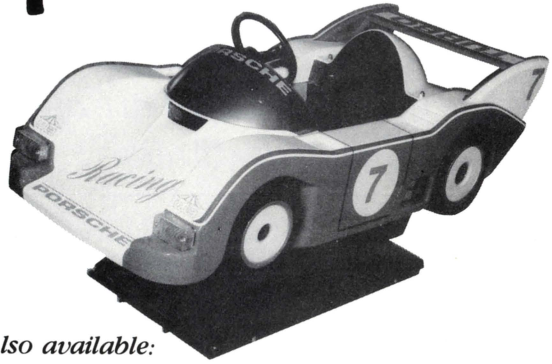

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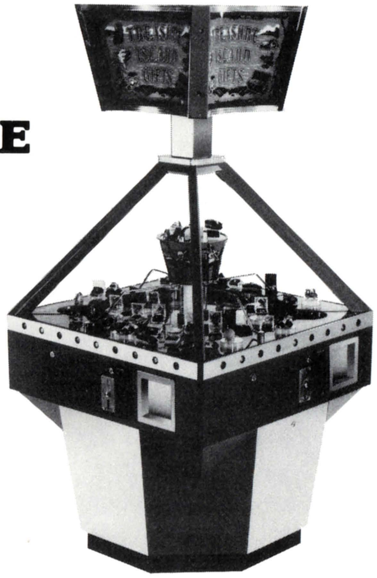

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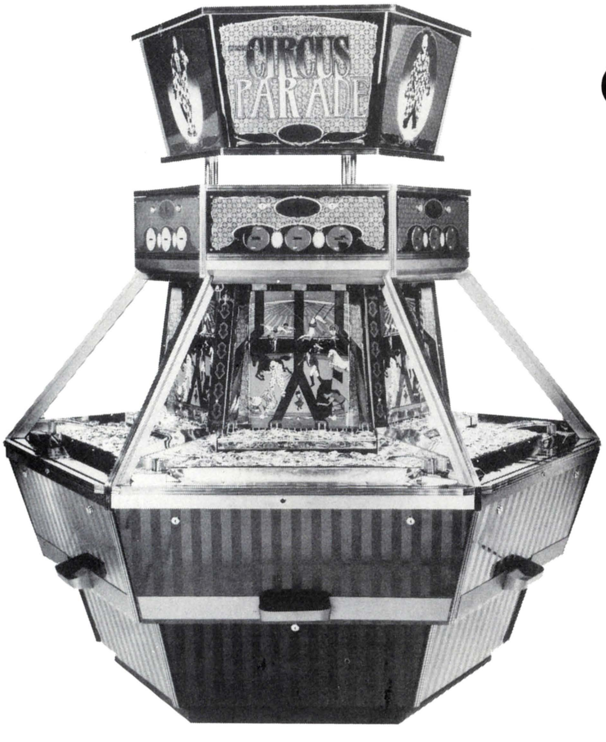

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Do you have a formula for your equipment mix, or does it vary according to location?

It's varied, depending on location. However, since 1985 we've been utilizing a great deal more of "redemption and manual dexterity"-type pieces. Approximately 25 to 30 percent of the equipment that's in our rooms now will be of that type, such as bowlers, knockdowns, basketball games, and so on.

> *"Leasing agents are always receptive to lease locations to brand names rather than 'independents'."*

Do you focus much on promotions? Do you do anything to promote good will?

Most of our store promotions are internal-type promotions. This includes Ladies' Day, Mall Employee's Day, special days for certain groups that would get free games, and things such as that. We do some media advertising, but only as much as is required by the various leases that we have with the malls.

We promote good will by working with some of the handicapped groups, allowing them to come in with their classes to play a few hours worth of games at the arcades.

Do you feel that home games have had an impact on your business, good or bad?

The jury's still out on that subject. I have not felt an impact from it yet, although it is becoming increasingly more popular. At this point, it hasn't affected our business at all.

> *"Game distributors are more involved in buying and running route operations than are any of the manufacturers."*

Finally, what are your views on the Red Baron ruling?

Frankly, I'm not in favor of utilizing parallel games. I feel it's the type of thing that is not healthy, and it continues to create another rift in the manufacturer-operator relationship. The manufacturers pay a great deal of money for the right to produce certain games. The ability for people to buy these parallel games, even though they may not be named the same thing or play exactly the same, infringes upon the manufacturer's ability to produce and sell the number of units it's going to take to make him profitable.

It's a short-sighted approach by operators to do this, because we are dependent upon our manufacturers to produce good equipment so our businesses can stay healthy. ☐

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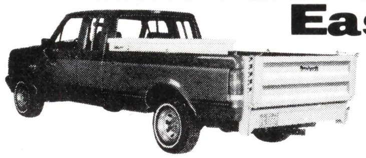

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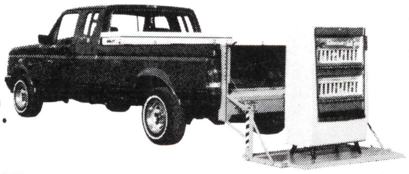

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Eastern introduces customers to the Rowe *LaserStar*

Eastern Distributors Co. of Philadelphia, a division of Eastern Music Systems Corp., recently unveiled the new Rowe *LaserStar* all-CD jukebox for its customers at a reception and dinner party at the Sheraton Hotel in King of Prussia, Pa.

Mel Sonier, president of Eastern Distributors; Morris Zacher, vice president; Phil Steinberg, secretary; and other members of the staff entertained 60 operators and their spouses at the event. Rowe International representatives present included Joel Friedman, Jerry Gordon, and Ted Lloyd.

Eastern was very pleased with the turnout and anticipates a great music year thanks to Rowe's product line, especially the *LaserStar*, and to Eastern's dedicated staff. ☐

Eastern's John Wilkins (l) and Victor Marchese help guests check out the new Rowe *LaserStar*.

Rowe's Joel Friedman proudly displays the Rowe *LaserStar*.

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Eastern's Mel Sonier welcomes guests.

The industry beginning its climb

In perhaps a slight understatement but with a perceptive outlook, Play Meter publisher Ralph Lally said in his editorial in the December 1978 issue, "The introduction of video games will probably rank as the decade's number one innovation. No one can doubt the vast number of new locations and players they brought to the industry." He added that solid state pinball would most likely run a close second. He pointed out that solid state had already increased the average earnings of pinball.

However, 10 years ago pinball was still king, but the change was becoming evident. Video games were beginning their climb to stardom, surpassing pinball in player popularity as well as sheer numbers of new games. Surprisingly, it was at AMOA '78 that The Cherry Group from England exhibited a universal game cabinet. Ralph described it like this: "When it comes time for an operator to buy a new game, all he does is buy the PC board, a new instruction panel, and new graphics. This takes the operator out of the moving business and the manufacturer out of the cabinet business. The universal cabinet can save this industry a tremendous amount of money. And that, my friends, is what innovation is all about."

Of course, we know that it was a concept conceived long before its time. Though video supremacy was evident, video games had not yet become the dominating equipment in the coin-op industry. It would be years before the idea of a universal cabinet would be accepted. At AMOA '78 there was an array of space games, feeding off of the popularity of Cinematronics' *Space Wars* of the year before. One of those space games would have a tremendous impact on the coin-op industry. *Space Invaders* became one of the most popular video games of all time. Other space games shown at AMOA '78 included: *Space War, Orbit, Battlestar, Star Fire,* and *Star Wars*, still in production at Cinematronics. *Star War* (no "s") was introduced by Vectorbeam and created by Larry Rosenthal, who also developed *Space Wars*. Cinematronics would eventually buy Vectorbeam. But in the midst of the space invasion Gremlin introduced a cutesy game called *Frogs*. Little did anyone know that it would be a cutesy game called *Pac-Man* several years later that would signal the decline of the video game industry.

The concept of using a popular group or star would continue for several years.

Also at the show were various games with themes from Hollywood. The concept of using a popular group or star would continue for several years. The three shown at AMOA '78 were *Charlie's Angels*, *Nugent*, and *Playboy*. Atari showed *Football*, a semi-cocktail table configuration that was a steady earner for many years. However, the surprise that year was a wall game from Atari called *UFO*, which simulated travel through space. The player fired lasers at flying saucers as they crossed the space craft's path.

The hot topics covered in the seminar 10 years ago were the jukebox license fee, how to make more money with existing equipment, finding good locations, and the quality of equipment. I guess some things don't change that much! At the general membership meeting Wayne Hesch was installed as the new AMOA president. Wayne Hesch passed away in early 1983 and AMOA set up a scholarship fund in his honor. The Wayne Hesch Scholarship

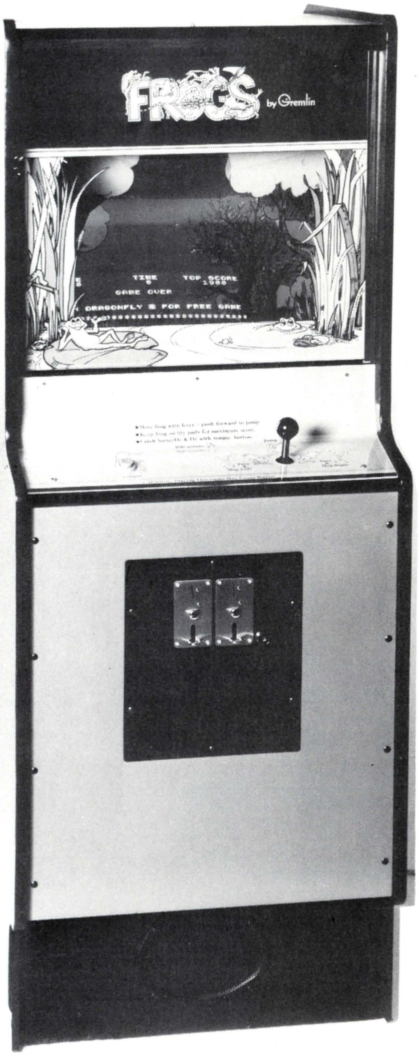
Wayne Hesch (center back row) was installed as AMOA president in 1978.

TEN YEARS AGO

Fund has been tremendously successful.

You Don't Bring Me Flowers by Barbra Streisand and Neil Diamond was the number one song in December 1978. Other top tunes included MacArthur Park, I Love the Night Life, I Just Wanna Stop, Double Vision, Sharing the Night Together, Alive Again, How Much I Feel, Time Passages, and Strange Way.

The games featured in the New Products section of Play Meter were Atari's *Football* and *Orbit*, Bally's *Playboy* pinball, *Charlie's Angels* and *Gemini* from Gottlieb, *Touchdown Fever* by Telmark Systems, Midway's *Rotation VIII* that featured a rotating playfield, *Frogs* from Gremlin, and Stern's *Nugent*. ☐



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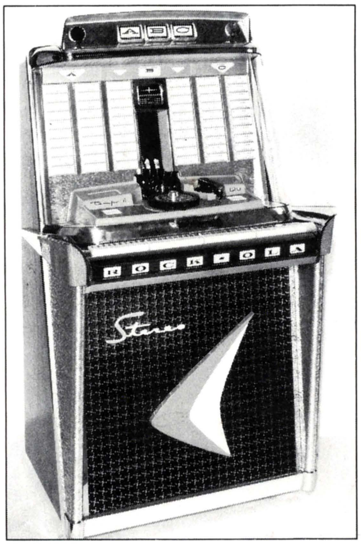

Billboard's top rock 'n roll hits for the start of the new decade listed Elvis in first place with "It's Now or Never," then The Everly Brothers' "Cathy's Clown," and Johnny Preston's "Running Bear."

The Drifters pleaded "Save the Last Dance for Me," Chubby Checker debuted "The Twist," the Hollywood Argyles captured comic strip whimsy with "Alley Oop," Maurice Williams and The Zodiacs brought "Stay" to the number eight spot, Jimmy Jones touted "Handy Man," and The Ventures anchored the list with "Walk Don't Run" as number ten.

It was a year of change, a new era with a young president, and high hopes for the space program. The rounded look so prevalent in jukeboxes was changing to a more square, geometric look. Title strips were up high on the Tempo II, and you could still see the 45's playing on a turntable right before your eyes.

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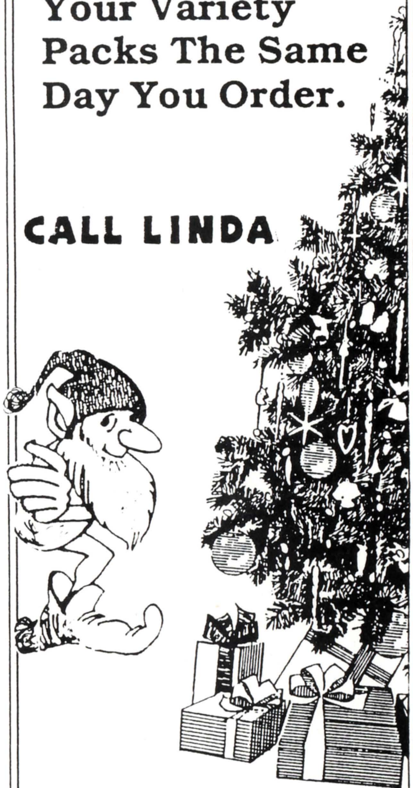

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TOP TEN

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Hot 100

TITLE	ARTIST	Label & Number/Distributing Label
1. WILD, WILD WEST	THE ESCAPE CLUB	ATLANTIC 7-89048
2. KOKOMO	THE BEACH BOYS	ELEKTRA 7-69385
3. THE LOCO-MOTION	KYLIE MINOGUE	GEFFEN 7-27752
4. BAD MEDICINE	BON JOVI	MERCURY 870 657-7/POLYGRAM
5. ONE MOMENT IN TIME	WHITNEY HOUSTON	ARISTA 1-9743
6. GROOVY KIND OF LOVE	PHIL COLLINS	ATLANTIC 7-89017
7. DESIRE	U2	ISLAND 7-99250/ATLANTIC
8. BABY, I LOVE YOUR WAY/FREEBIRD MEDLEY	WILL TO POWER	EPIC 34-08034/E.P.A.
9. KISSING A FOOL	GEORGE MICHAEL	COLUMBIA 38-08050
10. NEVER TEAR US APART	INXS	ATLANTIC 7-89038

Country

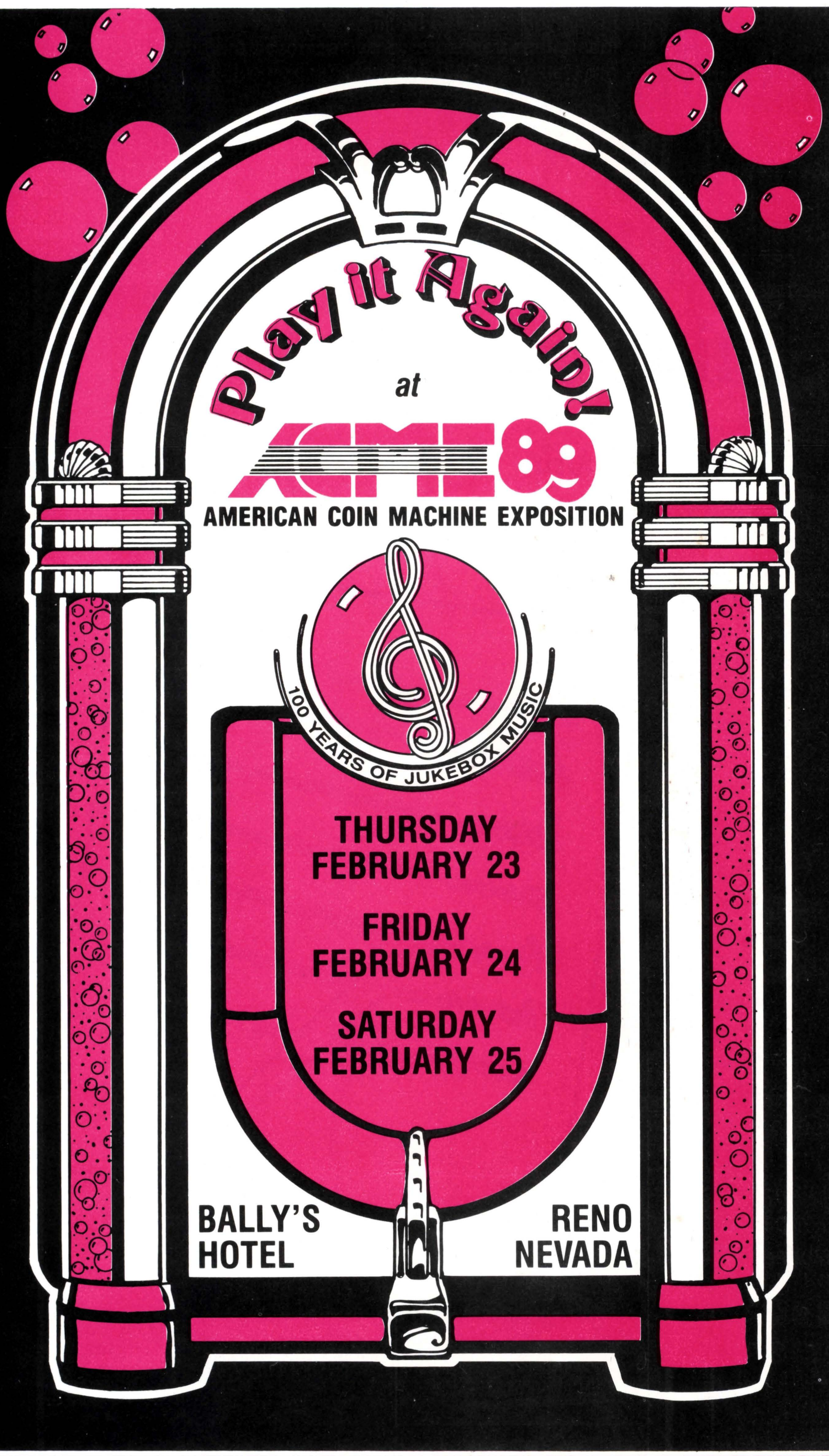
TITLE	ARTIST	Label & Number/Distributing Label
1. RUNAWAY TRAIN	ROSANNE CASH	COLUMBIA 38-07988/CBS
2. NEW SHADE OF BLUE	SOUTHERN PACIFIC	WARNER BROS. 7-27790
3. I'LL LEAVE THIS WORLD LOVING YOU	RICKY VAN SHELTON	COLUMBIA 38-08022
4. I'VE BEEN LOOKING	NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND	WARNER BROS. 7-22750
5. I KNOW HOW HE FEELS	REBA MCENTIRE	MCA 53402
6. IF YOU AIN'T LOVIN', YOU AIN'T LIVIN'	GEORGE STRAIT	MCA 53400
7. I WISH THAT I COULD FALL IN LOVE TODAY	BARBARA MANDRELL	CAPITOL 44220
8. CHISELED IN STONE	VERN GOSDIN	COLUMBIA 38-08003/CBS
9. THAT'S THAT	MICHAEL JOHNSON	RCA 8650-7
10. DESPERATELY	DON WILLIAMS	CAPITOL 44216

Adult Contemporary

TITLE	ARTIST	Label & Number/Distributing Label
1. HOW CAN I FALL?	BREATHE	A&M 1224
2. KISSING A FOOL	GEORGE MICHAEL	COLUMBIA 38-08050
3. FOREVER YOUNG	ROD STEWART	WARNER BROS. 7-27796
4. A WORD IN SPANISH	ELTON JOHN	MCA 53408
5. ONE MOMENT IN TIME	WHITNEY HOUSTON	ARISTA 1-9743
6. LOOK AWAY	CHICAGO	REPRISE 7-27766
7. GROOVY KIND OF LOVE	PHIL COLLINS	ATLANTIC 7-89017
8. TILL I LOVED YOU	BARBARA STREISAND & DON JOHNSON	COLUMBIA 38-08062
9. GIVING YOU THE BEST THAT I GOT	ANITA BAKER	ELEKTRA 7-69371
10. DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT THE NIGHT	STEVE WINWOOD	VIRGIN 7-99290

Pop/Rock Albums

TITLE	ARTIST	Label & Number/Distributing Label
1. RATTLE AND HUM	U2	ISLAND 91003/ATLANTIC
2. APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION	GUNS N'ROSES	GEFFEN GHS 24148
3. NEW JERSEY	BON JOVI	MERCURY 836 345 1/POLYGRAM
4. COCKTAIL	SOUNDTRACK	ELEKTRA 60806
5. HYSTERIA	DEF LEPPARD	MERCURY 830 675 1/POLYGRAM
6. DON'T BE CRUEL	BOBBY BROWN	MCA 42185
7. GIVING YOU THE BEST THAT I GOT	ANITA BAKER	ELEKTRA 60827
8. FAITH	GEORGE MICHAEL	COLUMBIA OC 40867
9. SIMPLE PLEASURES	BOBBY MCFERRIN	EMI E1 48059
10. LONG COLD WINTER	CINDERELLA	MERCURY 834 612 1/POLYGRAM



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Proceed with caution before signing contracts

by Scott A. Milburn

Wouldn't Ronald Reagan be surprised if he learned he was personally responsible for this year's payment on the national debt?

Fortunately for him, he has little to worry about. No U.S. president has been held personally liable for debts incurred by the country while he was president. Unfortunately, corporate presidents and other corporate officers have not been so lucky.

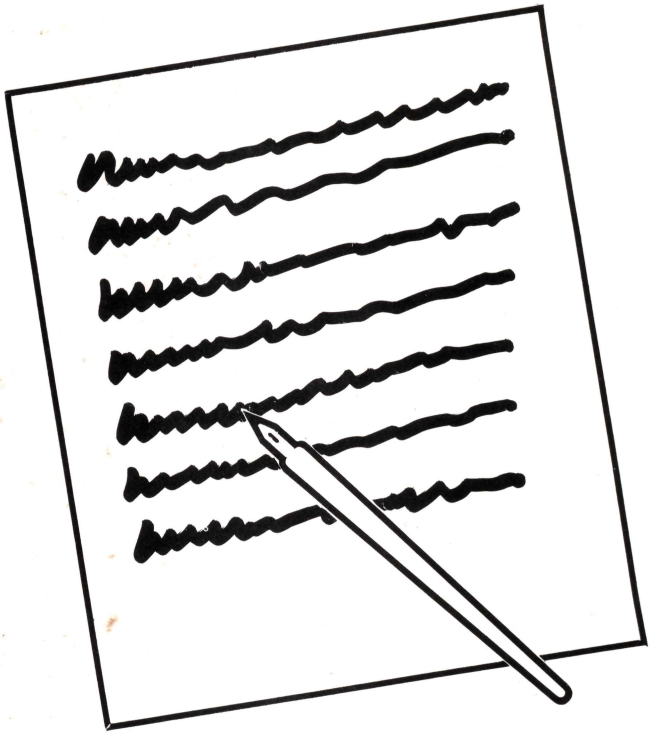
There are many cases in every state where company officers have been held personally liable for the corporation's debts. These officers were just as surprised as President Reagan might be; they thought they were protected from personal liability because their business was operated as a corporation. However, they were actually forced to write a personal check to cover the corporation's debt.

Corporate officers who fail to include their title when they sign loan papers and other contracts risk finding themselves in this too-frequent predicament. Hungry creditors of cash-strapped corporations can and do use this avenue to collect their debts.

The possibility for such personal liability results from the nature of contracts and the analysis used by courts in reviewing them. Even if the officer did not intend to become personally liable for the debt incurred by the corporation when signing on its behalf, forgetting to include his or her title can make that intent irrelevant. The court cannot determine intent after the fact if the unambiguous wording of the contract makes the officer liable as an individual.

> *''A corporate officer of a video arcade who signs loan papers for an operating line of credit could become personally liable for that debt if he signs only his name.''*

For example, a corporate officer of a video arcade who signs loan papers for an operating line of credit could become personally liable for that debt if he signs only his name. If the corporation fails to pay the bank, and the court determines that the loan documents actually state that the corporate officer who signed them was making a personal commitment, that officer can be forced to personally honor the debt.

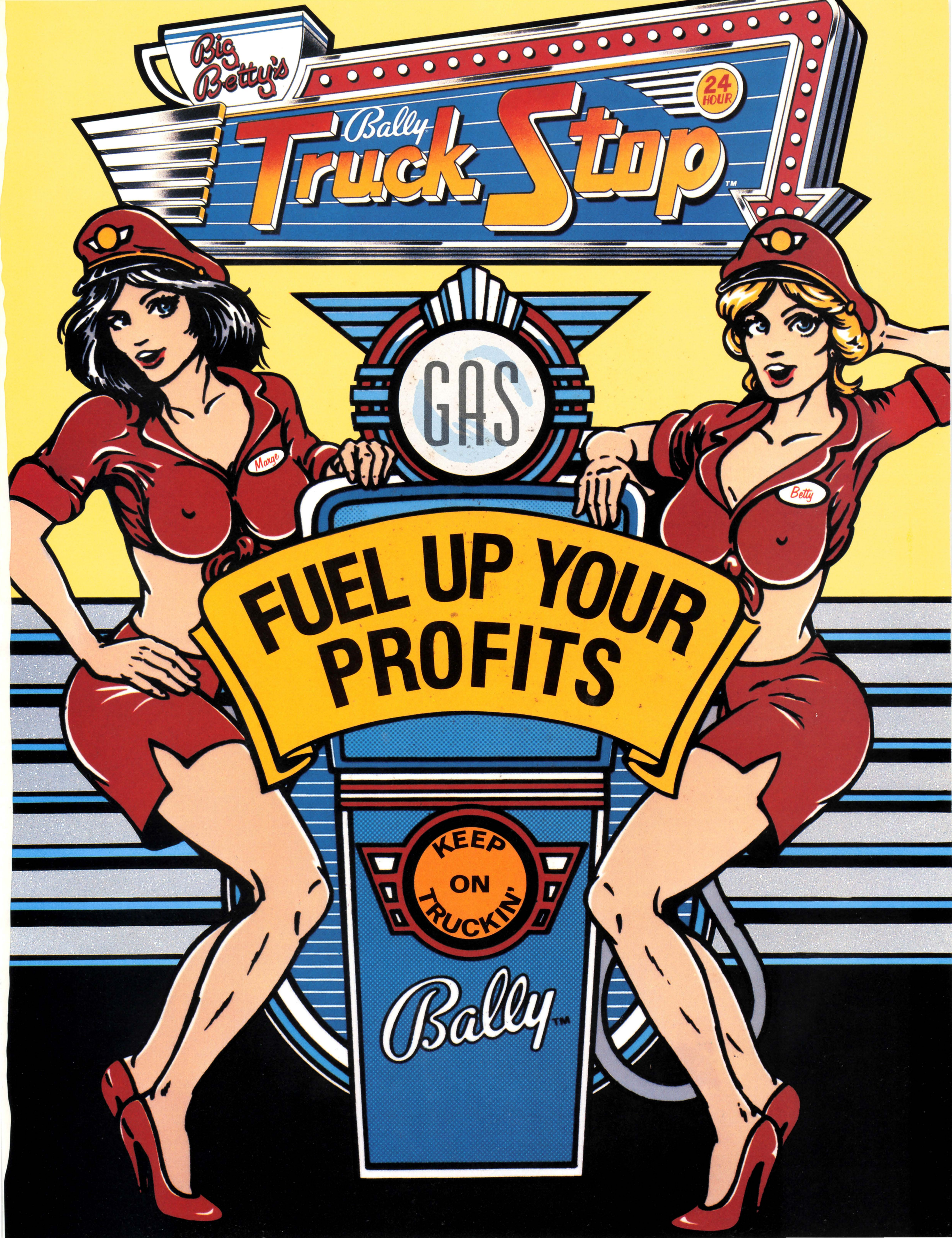


This is not the only situation in which such personal liability might arise. A corporation is technically a separate legal entity; it is an ''it.'' Therefore, even loan papers that say something similar to ''we the officers of X company, promise to pay...'' can cause problems. The wording of the contract accompanied by the unqualified signatures implies that the signators are incurring the debt as individuals, not on behalf of the corporate entity.

Personal liability can also occur when several officers have signed contracts or loan forms and some have omitted their titles. Those who included their titles are exempted from personal liability, while those who omitted their titles have been held personally liable.

Even signing corporate checks can mean trouble for the individual if the signator's title is not included. For example, officers who signed just their name to corporate checks that were returned for insufficient funds have been found personally liable for covering those checks.

The American Law Reports sums up the guideline followed by the courts: ''In general, it may be said that one who places his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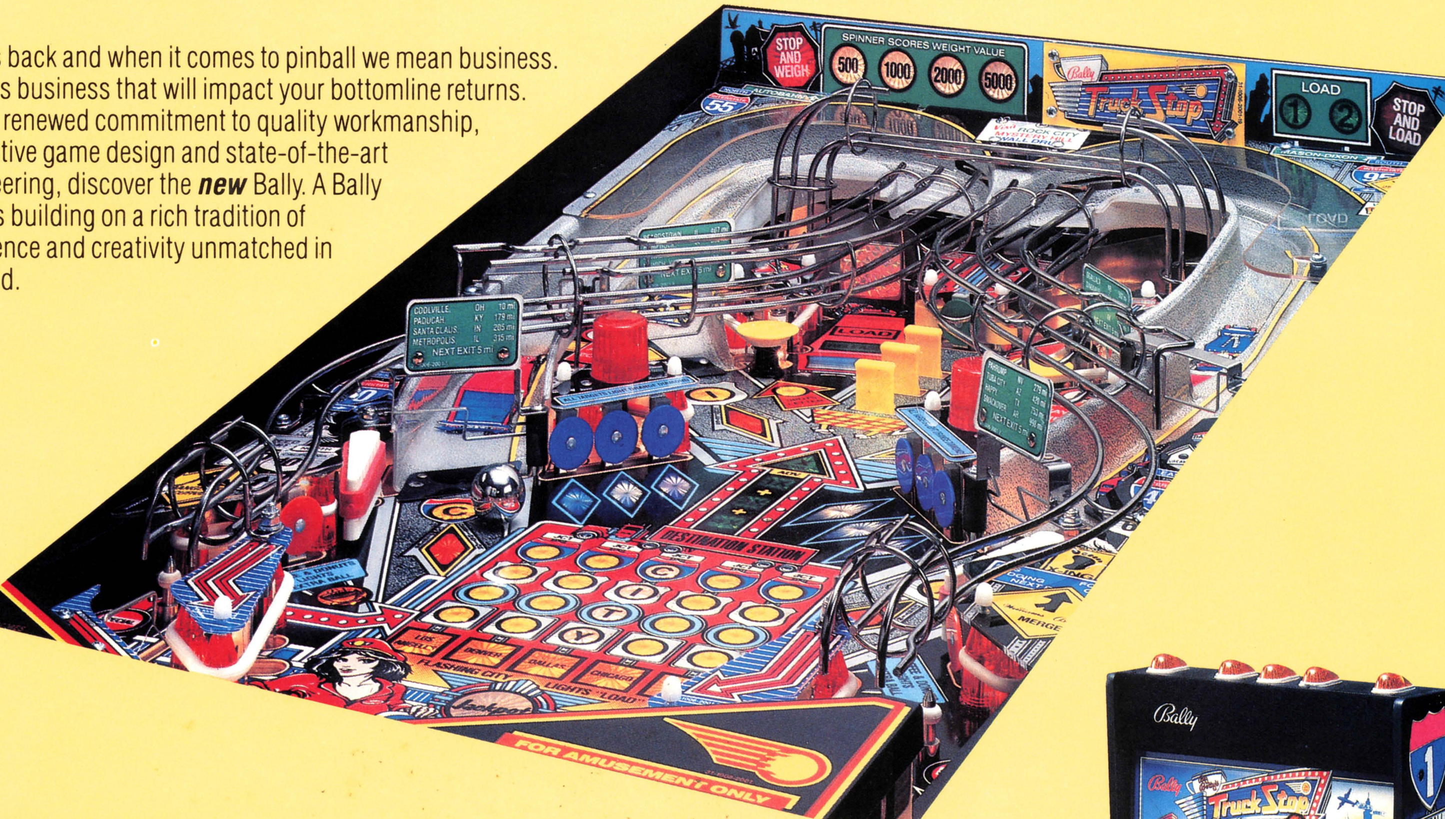

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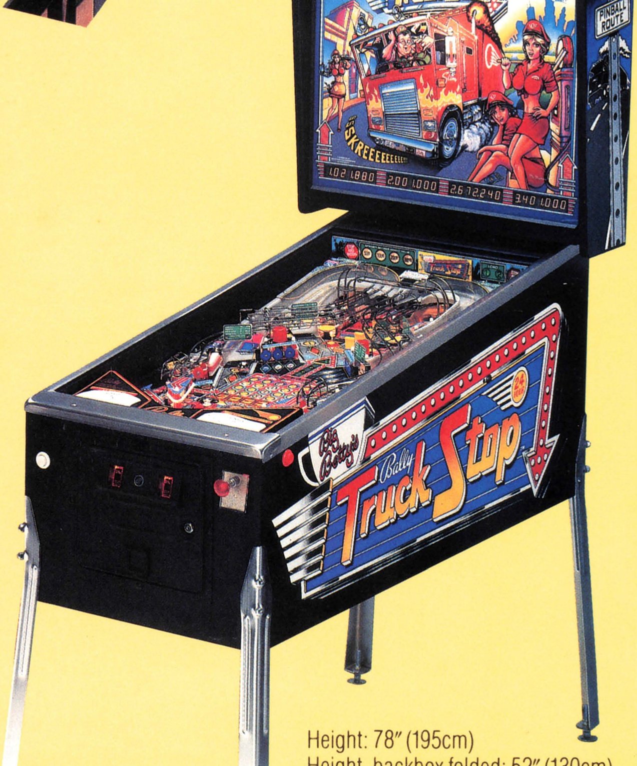

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unqualified signature on an instrument as maker or endorser will not be able to escape liability as such by a mere assertion that he intended to sign only as the representative of a corporation of which he is an officer or director.''

Not every corporate officer who has signed a contract without a qualifying title and was later pursued by a creditor has been forced to personally pay, but a mere assertion that the person intended to sign only as a representative is not sufficient. The Uniform Commercial Code, which governs many of these cases, does allow evidence in certain situations as proof that the signer is not personally liable for the debt.

> *''Remember that signing legal contracts that are ambiguous can leave you personally a whole lot poorer.''*

If the signer can prove that both parties clearly understood that the contractual agreement was between the creditor and the corporation, not the creditor and the individual, the signer may escape personal liability. This is provided that the contract refers to the corporation in some way.

One way to prove the creditor's understanding is to establish an ongoing relationship between the creditor and the corporation, in which the expectation has always been that the corporation was liable for the debt instead of the corporate officer.

Personal liability is also limited by evidence that the creditor knew the officer was signing only as a representative of the corporation. However, proving in court that the creditor was aware of the limited scope of liability created by the officer's signature can be difficult.

> *''Even signing corporate checks can mean trouble for the individual if the signator's title is not included.''*

The best way to avoid such legal and financial problems, however, is to play it safe. All corporate officers should take special precautions when signing contracts or loan documents as a representative of a corporation. Signers should always include their office or title with their signature, and the name of the organization should be included on the papers.

Also, the signature, corporate title and corporate name should refer to each other in such a manner that it is clear that the signer is only signing as a representative. This means using ''it'' instead of ''we'' when referring to the corporate entity and using ''by'' or ''for'' as an extra precaution. For example, a signer should use ''by John Doe, president'' or ''John Doe, president, for X corporation,'' to be legally protected.

So what do you do if you have already signed contracts without including your corporate title? If you think it necessary, you could correct the problem by renegotiating the contract. If you think you can prove through other evidence that the intended relationship was between the corporation and the creditor, be sure to preserve all of the associated evidence. It may be wise to discuss this with your attorney.

In the future, remember that signing legal contracts that are ambiguous can leave you personally a whole lot poorer. Ronald Reagan many never have this problem as president of the nation, but as an officer of a corporation, your chances of writing a personal check for a corporate debt are considerably higher.

The old motto ''better safe than sorry'' definitely applies. ☐

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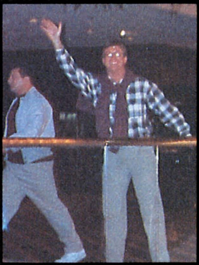

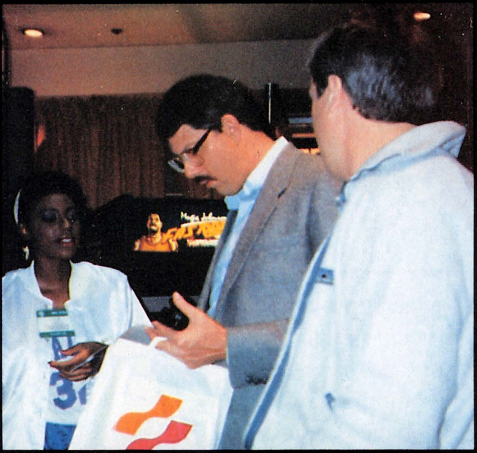

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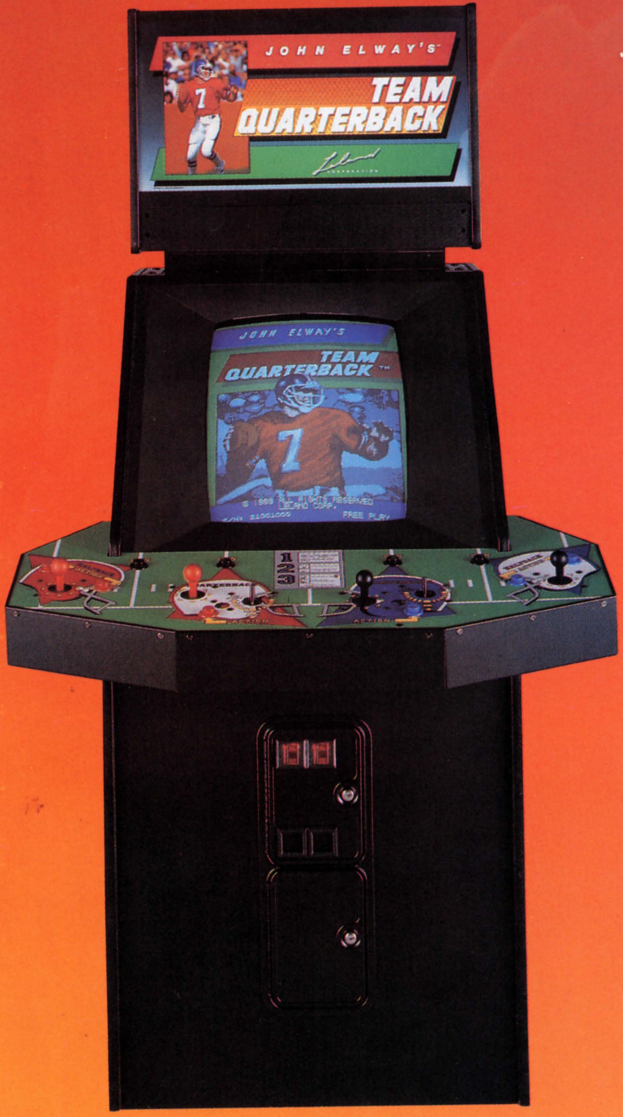
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TEAM QUARTERBACK
JOHN ELWAY'S
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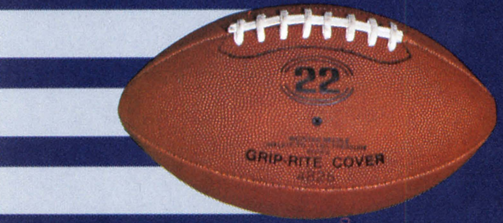
ACTION

Team Leland U.S.A.

TEAM QUA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GRIP-RITE COVER

JOHN ELWAY'S
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QUARTERBACK
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TEAM
JOHN ELWAY'S
TEAM
QUARTERBACK

Walk up to it,

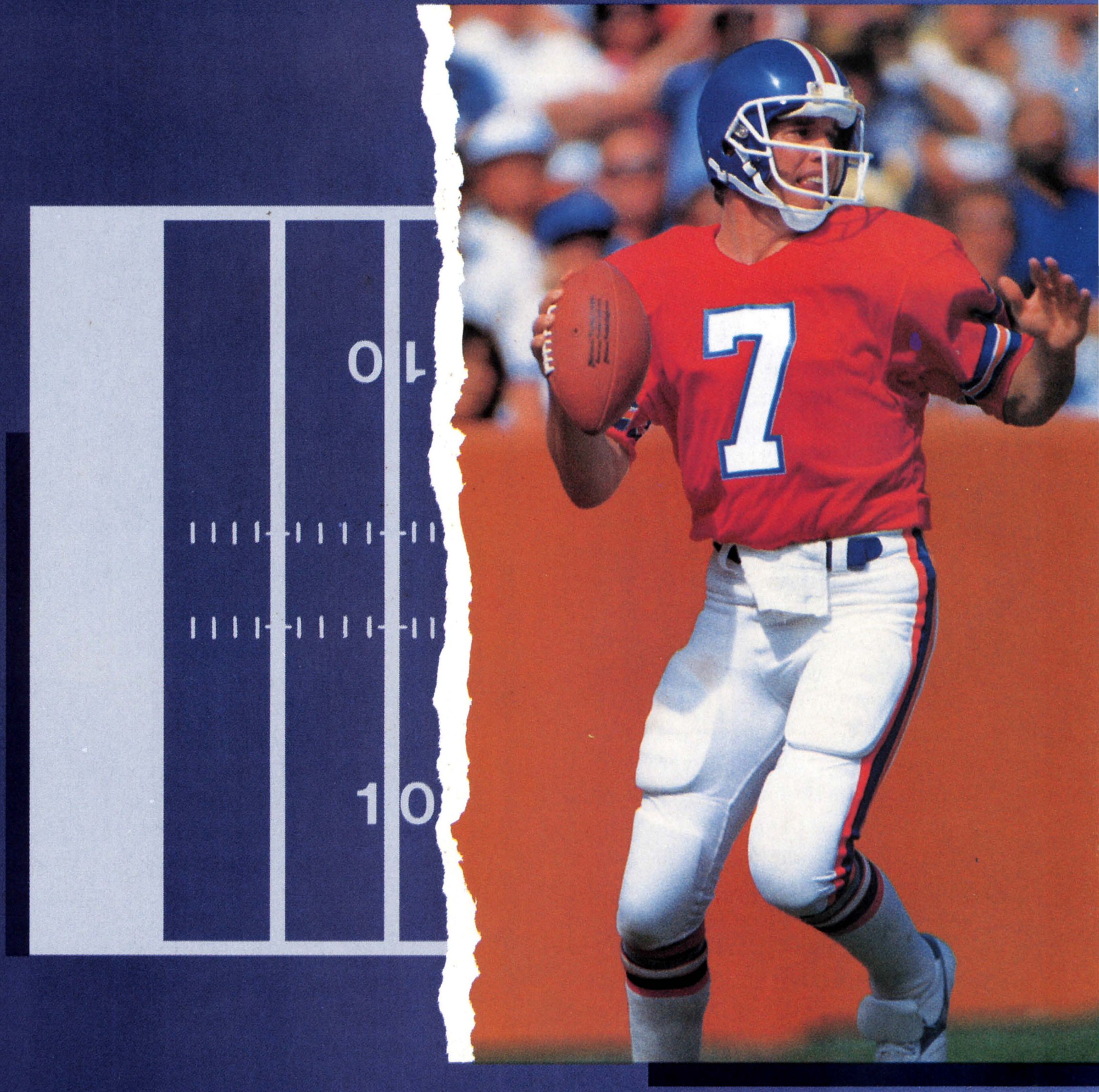
drop in a coin . . .

watch all hell break

loose. Whoever said

it's just a game better

take a closer look.



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RTERBACK

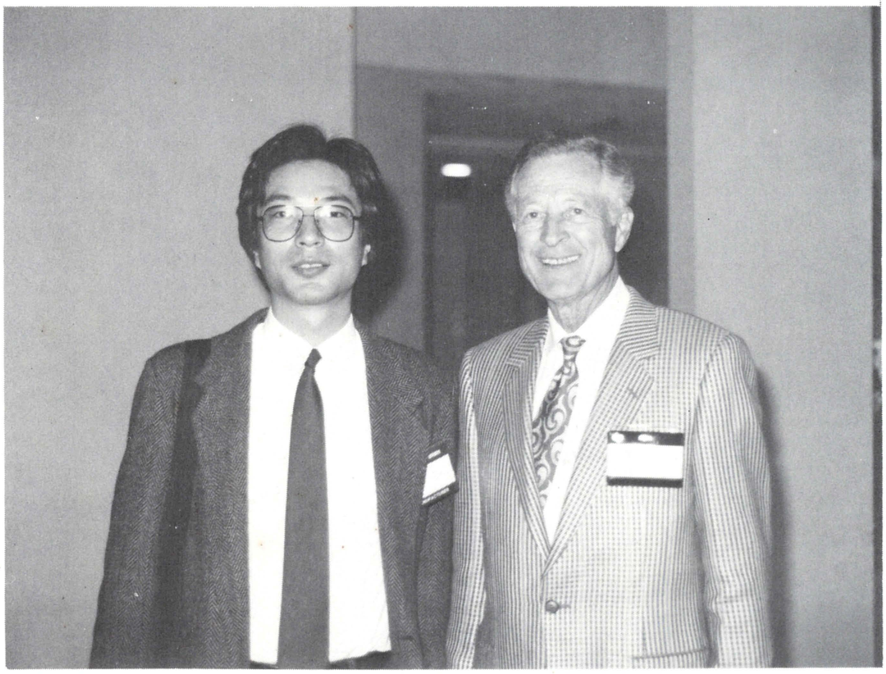
Half Century Club International awards

While AMOA honored members who have been dedicated to the coin-op industry for more than 50 years, another group presented awards for outstanding performance in the industry. The Half Century Club International was founded by Al Rodstein and Steve Kordek during the past American Coin Machine Expo in Reno this past March and is only for those who have been in the coin-op industry for 50 years. Associate membership is also available for those in the industry for 40 years. During the time between ACME and AMOA '88, members were asked to vote for the most outstanding individual in each of several categories, and the winners were presented awards during AMOA.

The Pioneer Award went to a deceased figure who made a marked contribution to the industry's history. Those nominated were Ray Maloney (Bally), Harry Williams (Williams), Lyn Durant (United), Sam Stern (Williams, Seeburg, and Stern Electronics), and Dave Gottlieb (Gottlieb). The winner was Dave Gottlieb, whose son Alvin accepted the award.

Nominees for the Leadership Award for a living industry legend were David Rockola, Nolan Bushnell, Jack Gordon, Si Redd, and Bill O'Donnell. The winner was Bill O'Donnell, who Rodstein described as a man who brought a simple pingame company up to the stars.

The Golden Coin Award was presented to a machine that had the most significant impact on the industry in the last 50 years. The winner was *Pac-Man*, and the award was accepted by Namco design team leader Toru Iwatani as other Namco representatives Y. Asada and K. Ito looked on. Hide Nakajima, former Namco president, told the group, "I am very pleased to be among such an august group of industry people. One reason is because you make me feel so young. I hope one day to be included among your peers, although that may take another 35 years."



Al Rodstein presented the Golden Coin Award to Toru Iwatani, the Namco design team leader who created *Pac-Man*.

Members talk with pals at the HCCI meeting.

Alvin Gottlieb (center) chats with friends about how proud he was to accept the Pioneer Award for his late father Dave Gottlieb.

Other coin-op veterans who shared stories and met old friends included Joe Barton, Bert Betti, John Bilotta, Ed Blankenbeckler, Bob Breither, Marty Bromley, Paul Calamari, John Chapin, Sal DeBruno, Nate Feinstein, Nick Fokakis, Bob Jones, Joel Kleinman, Maynard Levin, Stan Levin, Irwin Margold, Nick Malone, Bob Nims, Herb Oettinger, Charlie Piantieri, Frank Rizzo, Bob Rondeau, Hank Ross, Nick Stratas, Paul Strahan, Sol Tabb, Dick Valosek, Art Velasquez, and Len Zeidman. Calamari, Billotta, and Tabb each made informal speeches.

The group, formed mainly to honor industry figures and provide social gatherings for members to catch up on old times and reminisce with friends, will meet again during the ACME show in Reno. ☐

Bill O'Donnell was the winner of the Leadership Award. Here he shares a bit of history with members of the club.

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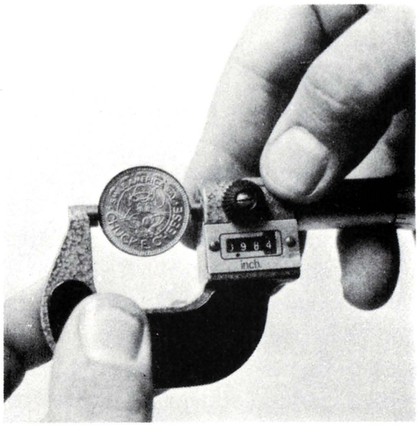

Quality control personnel at Hoffman & Hoffman checking diameter of token with micrometer

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The winter of our discontent

Discontent can take many forms. Husbands have probably experienced it at home with this scenario: You've been planning to go to a party, and when the night arrives your wife wails that she just doesn't have a thing to wear. Of course, while your mind wanders back to your American Express bill, you start pointing out some of your favorite outfits hanging in her closet. It doesn't help, because with each suggestion she says it isn't quite special enough. You dutifully tell her that she would look just great in anything she put on, but you know she isn't going to be satisfied.

Walt Hampshire of World Wide Enterprises in Sparta, Tenn., made this comparison and he is absolutely correct. At the AMOA show held this November in Chicago, operators were in somewhat the same predicament as the wife above. They opened the closet doors of equipment, studied them, and announced that there just wasn't any product. Manufacturers tried to appease operators by pointing out that there was, in fact, quite a bit of product from which to choose. But no matter the selection and variety, there just wasn't anything quite special enough. One operator said he thought that since the parallel issue is so close and so vicious that manufacturers would have the most tremendous equipment to show. However, it wasn't to be.

There was a lot of product shown, but there was an undertone of discontent stemming from the onslaught of parallel board talk. Both sides are so adamant in their belief that it's affecting other things that aren't even involved. It seems it's turned into a blame-me-and-I'll-blame-you situation. Clearly no one emerges a total winner; there's a price to pay.

Operators at the show weren't looking so much at what they would buy as much as what they could get along without. "I'm waiting to buy the board a lot cheaper," chirped one operator about a dedicated game. That sentiment ran like a thread throughout the show. Operators didn't and still don't know whether they will be able to buy parallel boards much cheaper, so they decide to wait. Those that have put the issue in perspective, and are getting down to the business of entertaining players and making money, realize that they need new games, now. Seeing in person is believing for operators. As one operator stated, "If it saves you from buying one 'dog' (of a game) then the trip's worth it."

To make decisions more difficult, some games were shown without an indication if they would be offered as dedicated or kit. One operator said of this, "I guess if the game doesn't get too much attention, the manufacturer will offer it to us as a kit. However, if it looks like it might be a hit game, they'll be greedy and soak us for as much as they can. Then they'll probably offer it as a kit somewhere down the road. Do the manufacturers really wonder why we're looking to buy parallels?"

> *"There was an undertone of discontent stemming from the onslaught of parallel board talk."*

Street operators were desperately hoping to seek solace in conversion kits only to find the pickings rather meager. "If someone would just offer us a kit that wasn't so expensive, they would sell a bunch of them," pleaded an operator. "We're in the software business," added another operator. "Jukeboxes stay on location for ten years with frequent changes of records. The same should be true of videos. We're not in the furniture business."

Another operator explained that poor cabinet quality meant he often had to "alter" the hardware to make it last longer and look better. He pointed out that most of the cabinets came with plexiglass over the monitor and should have one-half inch tempered glass. Also, the control panels have no protection from cigarette burns or other damage and should be covered with plexiglass. These are deficiencies he corrects at his own shop at his expense. The message is: If the hardware has to come with the software, at least make quality hardware and not cut corners.

Video

Frank Ballouz, who left his position at Nintendo to start his own company, must have heard the pleas because his second game *Cabal*, offered as a kit, was certainly one of the show hits. Although the game had been out awhile, operators talked about how steady the earnings had been. Those who hadn't tried *Cabal* were vowing to buy.

Williams kept good its intentions to reenter the video game business by showing *Narc*. Introduced in a blazing round of machine-gun fire, *Narc* will be offered as a dedicated game. Though rumors put the price too high, Roger Sharpe said that a price hadn't been determined and it could very well be much lower than many expect.

Taito's *Chase H.Q.*, the top game at the Japanese trade show a month earlier, held the honors at AMOA also. Offered as an upright and as a deluxe simulator, this driving game features a high speed chase as the player seeks to capture criminals. The sit-down simulator will probably be too expensive for most.

Leland showed *Team Quarterback*. What can we say except that it's great. Operators are still seeing high earnings on *Quarterback* and should follow it up with this new four-player gridiron game with added features.

Atari offered three dedicated selections in *Cyberball*, that futuristic football game that continues to earn on location; *Assault*, a two-player game with a 360-degree scrolling playfield; and *Final Lap*, a deluxe model sit-down driving game with

Carousel International Corporation

Marc Mandeltort of Marco Specialties watches Martin Murin of Rainbow Falls Video Service try the deluxe *Chase H.Q.*.

Ted Furkin talks about computers at an AMOA seminar.

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1

From left: Brad Veatch of Carousel Intl., Adam Gordo of Denis Recreation, and Ken Schaeffer of Carousel Intl.

Hal Barton gets game information from "Truck Stop Girl" Bev Rondeau

Ann Ono (l) of Visco Games with Mark and Sue Roland of Billmar Amusements.

Laura Orr and John McCaffer of Williams try *Nellie*, a novelty vendor at Gamemasters.

two seats, two wheels, and two monitors. In *Final Lap*, two players can compete against the clock or multiple players can race simultaneously on the same course.

Atari also had a sneak preview of a game from Namco called *Metal Hawk*, a helicopter simulator game. Mary Fujihara said Atari was testing the response and the game is not available yet. Judging by the comments from operators, Atari just may have it out soon.

SNK continues to ride high with the much-demanded *P.O.W.*, introduced here in the states in dedicated form only and not available elsewhere. It offers two-player simultaneous action. Players punch, kick, and use knives and guns in an effort to free prisoners. The game boasts SNK's new 16-bit, microprocessor-based hardware system.

Sega continued its string of game simulators with *Power Drift*, also offered as a dedicated game. Two uprights can be linked by cable, enabling two players to compete simultaneously. ''I like this feature,'' explained one operator. ''This way I can use the games individually or hook them up for a game something like *Final Lap*.

> *''Operators at the show weren't looking so much at what they would buy as what they could get along without.''*

Sega also debuted a game called *Scramble Spirits* set in the future. Complete with a 26-inch monitor and one- or two-player options, it features six flight missions and five bonus stages. Some operators were hoping the game would be offered as a kit.

Since we're picking the top games, *RoboCop*, a dedicated video from Data East, should certainly be added to the list. Adapting the name and theme of the popular movie should be a smart move. The idea of basing game play and graphics on a familiar theme is not new, but Data East seems to have chosen the right one. Look for *RoboCop* to be an all around winner.

Konami has consistently offered operators games with a fair return on investment and player appeal. The company showed a dedicated driving game called *Hot Chase* with an underworld gangster theme. It may not be number one but as one operator said, ''Driving games almost always do well and I'm a loyal Konami buyer, so I know I'll take a few.''

American Technos and Romstar showed a dedicated sequel to the number one hit of the year, *Double Dragon*. Called *Double Dragon II, The Revenge*, it got mixed reactions from operators. ''Just like the movies, the sequel is never quite as good,'' noted one operator. ''It's going to have the same staying power we've seen with *Double Dragon*,'' contradicted another. Another operator said they should have called it by another name instead of slapping a II on the original name, citing the sequel to *Pac-Man*, and *Ms. Pac-Man* as an example of a game sequel that had a different name and went on to outsell the original. Whether or not it can live up to the name, only time will tell. Most operators seem willing to take the chance. The two companies will share in the marketing of the game.

Tecmo has been a low-profile manufacturer, introducing only a few games. Its latest, *Ninja Gaiden*, appeared to be an exciting game that operators are hoping to buy as a kit. The company had not made the final decision on whether to sell it as dedicated or kit. It should be an asset to routes either way, but operators are hungry for good kits and this one could do very well.

Capcom had its *Capcom Bowling* game, first shown in Reno last March. It just doesn't quit! Operators commented that the game is a winner with young and old players alike. ''It's not that often that a game comes along that appeals to everyone. *Capcom Bowling* is that rare game for me,'' said an operator. An added benefit is that it is available as an upright, dedicated, or a vertical kit.

Capcom also showed a super game called *Ghouls and Ghosts* as a dedicated or an add-on kit for its CPS system. The company promised four games with the kit, the first being *Forgotten World*. ''We are really pleased with the reaction to *Ghouls and Ghosts*,'' said Capcom's Bill Cravens. ''We promised four games for the system and this is the second. We'll also sell quite a few as dedicated.''

Nintendo's *Play Choice-10* is continuing to win over operators and the latest games such as *Double Dragon, Gauntlet, Contra, R.R.I. Baseball* and *Super Mario Bros. 2* make it even more attractive. In addition, the company has added a countertop version that is sure to be a welcome addition to many locations. Operators had felt betrayed when Nintendo announced plans to limit its coin-op efforts to the *Play Choice*, but the company has been solid with its products and loyal to its promises. The company has a kit to convert VS systems to the *Play Choice*.

Arcadia Systems showed its Super Select System with advanced Amiga hardware and easy-to-install kits. One kit in particular won rave reviews—*Magic Johnson's Fast Break*. This basketball game takes the player through seven rounds of two-on-two action with Magic Johnson's strategic input into the game.

Bally introduced its universal cabinet for vertical or horizontal formats. The cabinet is offered as an upright that adapts to fit 19- or 25-inch monitors or two 19-inch cocktail models to be used face-to-face or side-by-side.

> *''To make matters even worse, some games were shown without an indication if they would be offered as dedicated or kit.''*

Dynamo, the pool table, foosball, and air hockey giant, is leading the industry in cabinet design. Many booths sported Dynamo cabinets to display their wares. Although some operators were rather disappointed in kit selection on the floor, and wondered just what they were going to put in the cabinets they have, it's clear that Dynamo is carving its niche in the marketplace with cabinet designs offering cocktail, 25- and 19-inch cabinets.

Jaleco is also offering a cabinet with a twist: it is made of 18-gauge steel. Accor-

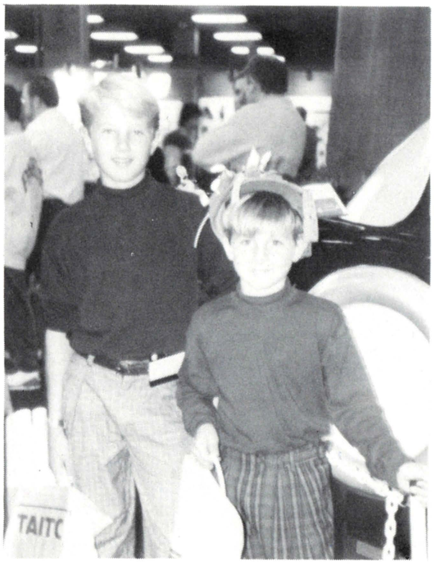
At Premier's booth, (l to r): Rowe's Bob LeBlanc, "Bad Girl" Joi, Premier's Daniel Clarton, Dave Irwin of H&H Vending, Elmer Hallgren of H&H Vending, and "Bad Girl" Sherry.

ORG
THANK YOU

By the novelty vendor *Org*, (l to r): Mel Evans of USA Vending, Neel Clark and Paul Berko of Carousel Industries, and Fred Simon of Amusements Inc.

SHOWBOAT
ROOSTA SHOOTA

Bill Russell (l) and George Kane of Kane Amusements by *Showboat* at the Coastal Amusement booth.



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Steve Shulman(l) and Ira Erstling (r) of HMS Monaco with Michael Zumbrun of Galaxy World Arcade, Bob Hansen of Atlas-Chicago, and Jerry Wilson of Galaxy World Arcade.

Arachnid's Chris Beall (r) with Dale Lazar of Lazar & Son and Jane Stevens of Williams-Bally.

NOVA
SEGA
SEGA
POWER DRIFT

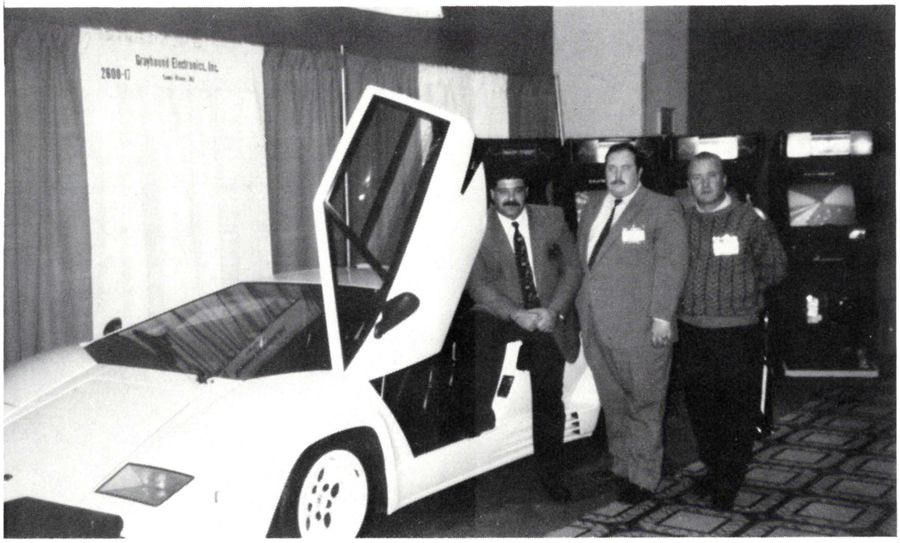
John Clark of Don Delcrest and Associates drives Sega's *Power Drift*. Looking on are Ellen Evans of Coin Controls and Gus Poulos of Galaxy Game Centers.

s & Used Boards

Drawing for the winner of original 1818 and 1831 coins at the Coin Data booth.

At Brady Distributing and Novelty, (l to r): John Gilbert of Merlin's Castle with David Cottrell, Lee Anne Bullard, and Charles Stutz of Brady.

Brian Duke of Capcom with gorgeous girlfriend Wendy.



The man and his car! That's Dominick Puma (l) and Bill Dughi of Grayhound Electronics with Enzo Novelli of Mid-Canada Amusements, standing by *Main Street Grand Prix* and the Lamborghini everyone talked about.

Ruth Ann Catton and Bob Bauer of Etone displayed all sizes of plush.

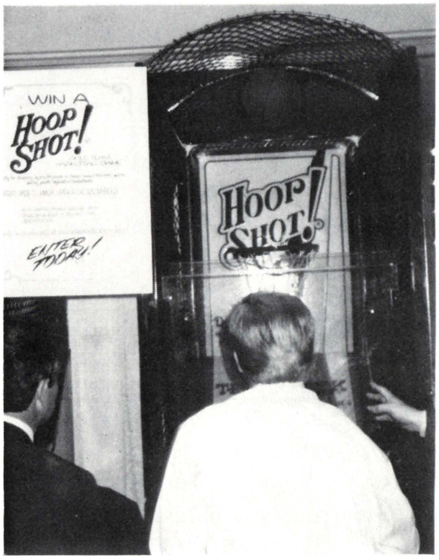
P.O.W.
PRISONERS OF WAR
P.O.W.

Standing in front of SNK's *P.O.W.*, (l to r): Taka Ogura, secretary to SNK chairman Eikichi Kawasaki; Kawasaki; and Susan Jarocki, Neal Zook, and Tracy Tate of SNK.

Virginia and Amber Kaufman of Exidy are all smiles over *Showdown*.

prizes!
EGISTER T

From left: Toni Taylor-Endoso of Prizes!, Larry Salganek of New Mexico Vending, and Kathy Moore of Prizes!


WIN A
HOOP SHOT!
ENTER TODAY!
HOOP SHOT!

Doyle debuted *Hoop Shot Gold*.

Toys &
San Antonio, Tx.
INTERNATIONAL

At P.M.I. Toys & Novelties, (l to r): Jim Ritchie, Scott Mosher of Pinball Plus, Mike Silverstein, Susan Gregory of Pioneer Sales, and Cliff Young.

Great Lakes Dart Distr
910-12
Greenfield, WI
Great Lakes Darts

Nick Voden and Marilyn Hempel of Great Lakes Dart Distributors.

ding to Howie Rubin, "This cabinet is designed for operators who don't mind spending a little more to get a cabinet that will last forever. It's built like a tank."

Other companies exhibiting cabinets included Plateau, with its Angle System available in four models: 19- and 25-inch monitor size, table, and countertop. Designed for fast and easy game rotation, the Angle System allows kit installation in 15 or 20 minutes. A.C.S. Corp. exhibited its Universal Conversion Cabinet in the Spaulding Concessions booth. The A.C.S. model is for 19-inch monitors, offers a stainless steel control panel predrilled for one or two joysticks, and a removable drawer for fast, easy conversion. Video Tech, seen in the Troy M Enterprises booth, also had an upright cabinet for 19-inch monitors. This model had a slide-out, removable control drawer and panel, two speakers, and over and under coin door with locking cash vault.

But there were kits available. Jaleco, a fairly new name in coin-op, will be a familiar name before long. It's first game, *P-47*, (sold as a kit) hit the game charts soon after it was introduced. "It was a good place to start," said Rubin. Following that game, the company showed a travel/adventure-themed game, *Legend of Makai*. "This type of game play does fantastic on home systems and we feel it will also do very well in coin-op," added Rubin.

The company also showed prototype games, *Hachooo*, a judo-themed game, and *Counter Force*, with an army theme. The latter is scheduled as a dedicated game equipped with a machine gun. Operators agreed that it was one of the better games shown.

Konami introduced two kits, *Thunder Cross* and *Final Round*. *Thunder Cross* is a horizontal kit with two-player interaction. The player takes off for outer space to prepare for battle. *Final Round* is a popular boxing theme and lets the player chose speed, power, and stamina before facing the heavies.

Sharp Image, besides selling *Rough Ranger* kits (Capcom sold the game as dedicated), showed a horizontal kit called *Turtleship* that featured screens scrolling both vertically and horizontally. It's a two-player, search-the-universe-and-destroy-the-forces-of-evil adventure.

Data East appealed to operators with two kits, *Cobra Command*, a helicopter-themed game, and *Atomic Runner Chelnov*, a heroic save-the-world adventure. Both are horizontal formats.

World Games showed *KuriKinton*, touted as "the most inexpensive kit on the market today." Along with the low price, the game seems to be on a winning streak. Operators commented that it was certainly worth the risk for a chance to operate a game that would enable them to see a good return on investment.

Pinball

That magic silver ball keeps rolling along. If you are in the market for a good pinball, now is the time to buy. All of the pinball manufacturers outdid themselves with an impressive selection of flipper fantasies.

> *"I guess if the game doesn't get too much attention, the manufacturer will offer it to us as a kit. However, if it looks like it might be a hit game, they'll be greedy and soak us for as much as they can."*

Of course, Williams has been on the top of pinball sales for a long time and brought a game deserving of the Williams name. *Taxi* has a bright yellow cabinet design with colors galore on the backglass. The name of the game is boldly displayed in a realistic "taxi" marquee just like you see on a real taxi cab. Lola (a Marilyn Monroe look alike), Santa Claus, Gorbie, and Drac adorn the backglass and playfield. For those skilled players, a red taxi cap with a big white "W" was the reward for high scoring.

Williams' sister company, Bally, surprised us all with a winner in *Truck Stop*. An 18-wheeler and truck stop chicks catch players' attention and the fast-paced skill shots keep them playing. Operators were glad to see that some of the characteristic features popular on Bally pins were still there. As one operator commented, "Experienced players can tell the feel of a Bally pin with their eyes closed." With Williams' genius game designer, Steve Kordek, scheduled to work closely with Bally, we'll surely see still more hits from Bally.

Data East just doesn't quit and proves that perseverance pays off in the form of its hit pin, *Time Machine*. It takes players back to the nostalgic 50s, complete with a diner, rock-n-roll jukebox, and the early sounds of pinball. Not only were operators pleased with the look and play, Data East has introduced some improvements on the electronics that the company says will reduce repairs and maintenance.

Talk about a crowded booth! Premier's pin, *Bad Girls*, features a bevy of beauties on the backglass. Some of the same cuties were handing out brochures to show attendees and generated great interest in the game. Bringing the favorite game of pool into the 80s with innovative features, the game itself is a treat to the eyes. Players line up shots while listening to an enchanting rhythm generated by a Yamaha soundboard.

Jukeboxes

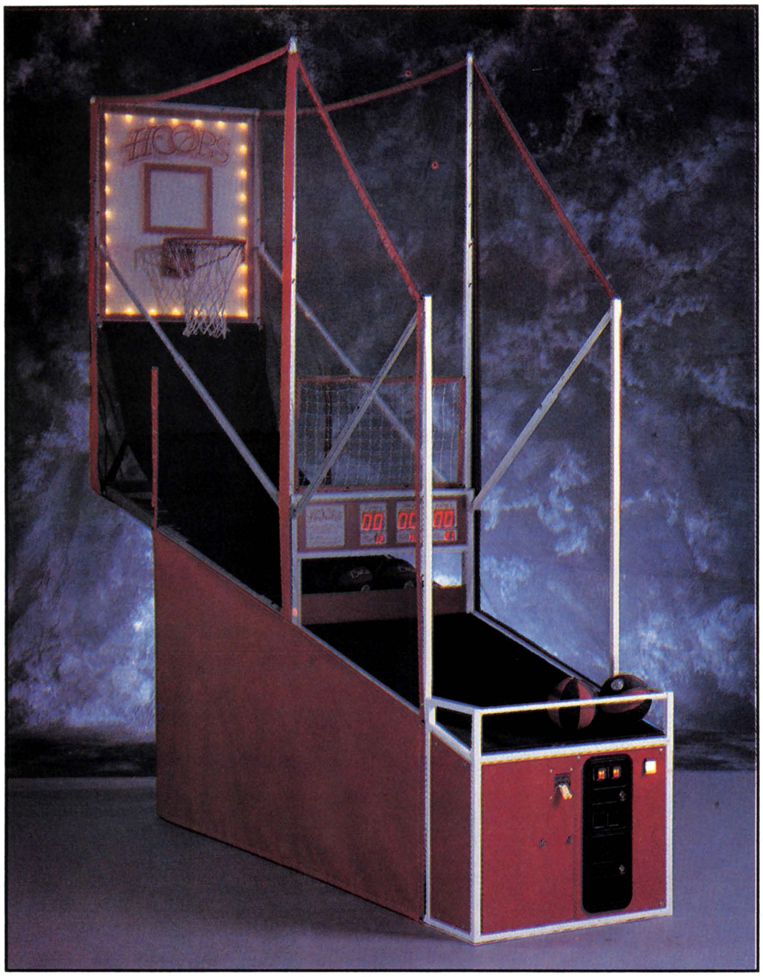
As always, the decibel level at the show was high. And, as always, the major contributors to the din were the jukebox manufacturers. But one thing was different in 1988: they were all lined up together in "Jukebox Row," which made it easier for operators to compare and contrast the exhibits.

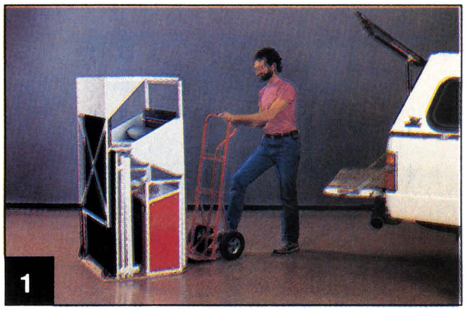
Probably the flashiest, most eye-catching jukebox came from Carson City Parlour Inc.'s *Songbird*. The new juke is literally a "blast from the past," as it houses the 45s in a modified '57 Thunderbird tail section. Distributed in the United States through NSM/Loewen-America, the pink *Songbird* has flashing taillights, pulsating exhaust ports, and a clear sound delivered through its NSM/Lions system.

NSM has manufactured two new jukeboxes that were exhibited at the expo: the *CD Star* and the *CD Comet*. The *CD Star* holds 100 CDs in two stacks, with a capacity of 1,600 titles. It is a wall-

HOOPS

The Famous Fold-up, Adjustable Basketball Game





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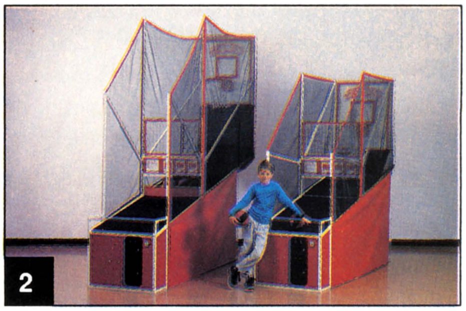

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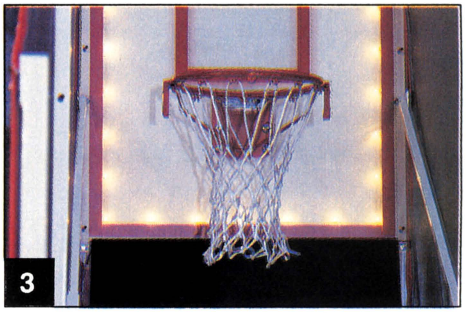


3

WHAT GAME HAS HELD ITS PLAYER APPEAL FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS?
Easily played alone, or in friendly competition, basketball has proven to be a big winner in many locations. However, problems of size, reliability, and installation time have discouraged many operators.

THE UNIQUE DESIGN OF THIS GAME WILL REVOLUTIONIZE THE OPERATOR'S USE OF COIN OPERATED BASKETBALL GAMES.

In addition to the three knockout features highlighted in the photos, the game offers many important benefits including:

- Sturdy, all-metal, welded construction with transparent fiberglass screen side panels for long lasting good looks.
- Highly reliable, shock mounted microprocessor-based electronics.
- All games have two-player scoring & unobtrusive sound enhancement.
- Coins-per-play, game time, replay level, etc. are operator settable.
- Resilient acrylic backboard with heavy duty custom hoop.
- Attract mode light chaser automatically switches to steady backboard lighting for play in dim locations.
- Optional bill acceptor, ticket dispenser.

Putting the operator's concerns first has produced a game that, though a bit more expensive, will provide many years of value, service and earnings for the discriminating buyer.

$2495

1. GAME FOLDS UP!
The entire game folds up into a self-contained package measuring an astonishing 5' x 2' x 32". Problems with storage and transportation are obviously minimized. Best of all, since the folded game fits through any door, one man can easily install it in under 30 minutes.

2. ADJUSTABLE LENGTH AND HEIGHT
Now you need only one game for all your location situations. This game is adjustable in both length and height from a compact 8' x 8' game to an impressive and challenging 10' x 10' set-up. Any combination of length and height (in 6" increments) is easily set. Adapt to a new size for your next location.

3. DUAL BEAM PHOTOCELL SCORING
Players particularly appreciate the dead-accurate photocell scoring and fast, smooth action of this game. (No ugly plastic ring hanging from the hoop net to break or slow things down.) The accuracy and consistency of scoring is especially conducive to league play.

ADASTRA, INC.
8345 West 16th Ave.
Denver, CO 80215
(800) NET-HOOP

Serving the Coin-Op Amusement Industry since 1974 mounted, dedicated CD phonograph. The *CD Comet* has similar features, but it operates by a remote control unit. The jukes are so new, in fact, that production on them won't begin until January '89.

Rowe International had plenty to display, including the much-praised and long-awaited *LaserStar* all-CD unit, the *ComboStar* (CD/45s combo), the *RoweStar* (45s), and video and nostalgia jukeboxes. One operator was heard marveling at the clean, crisp CD sound, especially on jazz selections. Wynton Marsalis' trumpet never sounded so sweet. And, to top it off, one of the musical Jackson siblings was on hand to sign pictures at the Rowe booth. Sorry, it wasn't Michael, but sister LaToya caused plenty of excitement on her own.

Wurlitzer displayed its *One More Time* nostalgia box, while Seeburg showed off its *LaserMusic System* and the nostalgic *Classic CD*. Rock-Ola had three jukebox models to woo operators: the *Model 498 CDX* (CD/45s combo), the *Model 498 X* (45s), and the *Model 1000* nostalgia jukebox.

Juke Rock Systems Inc.'s *Juketron* jukebox featured an interactive, video-based selection system that allows over 1,000 songs to be scanned. Such information as the year in which a song was popular, the most popular songs on that particular jukebox, and the upcoming songs in order of play are displayed on *Juketron*. As for audio, the jukebox utilizes a Sony 60-disc CD changer, a remote control unit, and a bi-amplification system with 300 watts total output.

Videobox Networks Inc. takes CD jukeboxes a step further with its *Videobox*, combining laser disc technology with an automatic robotic stacking system. The selection system offers eight different categories of music, from rock and country to jazz and comedy. The *Videobox* holds thirty discs, allowing the location to program to its liking. Two laser players are utilized, ensuring no delays between selections.

Pioneer Laser Entertainment Inc. attracted nice crowds with its Karaoke unit. A laser disc shows a background scene and the words to a particular song, and then, with microphone in hand, the crooner with the quarters gets a chance to flaunt his or her vocal chords. There were more hams at the Pioneer booth than a Chicago breakfast counter.

Basketball

The common sight at an AMOA Expo is one of operators stalking the exhibit floor, spending much of their time seeking out the new video or pin that will light up a location's cash register. But another category, basketball games, is rapidly emerging as a viable lure for the operator's eye.

At AMOA Expo '88, over a dozen basketball manufacturers were on hand to hawk the uniqueness of their games. Some games were brand new; others were released earlier but came to the show with improvements or modifications. Either way, here is a rundown of what was there.

Kramer Manufacturing's *Superstar Basketball* received praise from operators, who especially liked the availability of a four-player feature with separate player score displays. There are also displays for playing time, high score, and which quarter (one through four) the game is in. *Superstar Basketball* has dual flood lights and an all-steel construction.

> *''We're in the software business . . . we're not in the furniture business.''*

Adastra Inc. is new to the basketball scene. It made it's big splash with a West Tower display of *Hoops*, the only game that can be collapsed and folded up. The two-player game attracted operators who liked the fact that it measures five feet by two feet by 32 inches when folded, minimizing storage and transportation problems. *Hoops* is adjustable to either an eight foot by eight foot or a 10 foot by 10 foot set-up.

Street Basketball by QCK Electronics (marketed by Sunsoft Corp.) is the only one that offers the basketball games ''Horse'' and ''Pig.'' These are the old schoolyard games of challenge where one player makes a shot of his choice. The player that follows must duplicate the shot or be assessed a ''letter.'' When a player spells out ''Horse'' or ''Pig,'' he loses.

Another new company, Allme Inc., introduced its *Basketball Challenge* at the show. Measuring eight feet by eight feet by three feet, the game has a steel frame and wood-laminated side panels.

If it's side-by-side competition you're looking for, a chance for two players to fire away at two goals, then Troy M Enterprises and Intermark Amusements have basketball games to fill that need. Troy M is marketing Video-Tech's *Mini-Hoops*, which one operator said was good for those who like to distract their opponent while shooting. (Makes sense: if you have the lead, you can just bounce your ball off of the competition's ball; by the time he realizes your ploy, his time has run out.)

Intermark's *Competition Basketball* also has dual hoops for a two-player battle against the clock. It's made with lightweight PVC construction and has two different size possibilities for varied locations. An optional canopy adds ten inches to the height. Their *Countdown Basketball* is for single-player competition.

Operators still flock to Doyle & Associates' *Hoop Shot*, which was unveiled as ''new and improved'' at the show with its lightweight, modular design. Though *Hoop Shot* can take either sized basketball, one operator commended it for being one of the few to still favor the regulation size. ''When I'm playing basketball, I want to use a basketball, not play ball toss with a mini ball,'' is how one operator succinctly put it. Operators with larger locations can take advantage of the six-, eight-, and 10-player trailers.

Merit Industries and Gamemasters Inc. teamed up to exhibit *Sooper Shooter Basketball Champ*. The two companies decided to pool their talents a few months ago, with Gamemasters manufacturing the game to Merit specs and Merit handling the world-wide marketing. Operators said they especially liked the attractive red-and-white colors and the league/tournament guides that accompany the game.

Other basketball games that drew operator interest included Streak Shooter's *Streak Shooter* and *Streak Shooter Jr.*, Grayhound Electronics' *Championship Basketball* and *Coors Light Silver Bullet Sharpshooter Basketball*, Vari-Tech's *Hot Shots*, Design Plus Industries' *Quik Shot*, Altec's basketball game, and the granddaddy of them all,

From left: Romstar's Tim Jackson and Heh-Kyu Lee, James Industries' John Blouin, Atlas' Jerry Marcus, and Rene Lopez and Mr. Yasuki of Romstar.

RONIX
KONAMI

Terry Myers of Foxtronix talks with customers.

VALLEY
ar Darts

Valley's Bill Nemgar and James Griffiths.

Merit's Mort Ansky (l) and Mike Hopkins of Countertop Amusements by *Bullseye*, one of the *Genie Games*.

inc.
incorporated
POKER
DRAW88POKER

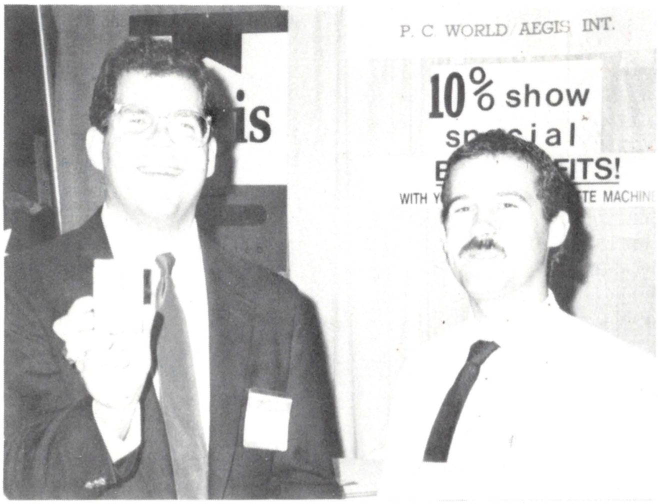
Cliff Dodge (r) of Big Ten Electronics welcomes George Kratsas of Amusement Supply Co.

Super Select System

Arcadia's Super Select System had *Magic Johnson's Fast Break*.

LaToya Jackson signed autographs for show-going fans in Rowe's booth.

Jim Pietrangelo of SMS (l) and Pat Ferruccio of Liberty Vending by the new *Sure Shot*.


P. C WORLD AEGIS INT.
10% show special
ITS!

Play Meter's Christopher Caire gets safe sex tips from P.C. World's Marcel Guillemette.

By *Sharp Shooter* from Gamemasters, (l to r): David Gillam and Mike Macke with Gary Strader and Lisa Harrison of Central Amusement.

NEW
TICKE DISPENS
HI-LO DOUBLE UP JOKER POKER
PLAY POKER

David Katz (l) of Kramer and Ray Webb of Games That Go Bump go over the *Hi-Lo Double-Up Joker Poker*.

Justin Korn (l) and Laurence Norjean of Videobox Networks flank their laser disc-driven *Videobox*.

JUMBO SKILL CRANE
by Grayhound
JUMBO SKILL CRANE

By the Grayhound *Jumbo Skill Crane*, (l to r): Grayhound's Tom Ricci, Scott Bright of All American Automatic, and Dan Dinnebeil of Grayhound.

Dan Brechner staffers, (l to r): Noel Small, Jay Rubenstein, Milton Brechner, Tom Suraci, and Mark Rasnow.

John Minkove and Duke Engelmann of Ace Novelty discuss merchandise with Dave Kelman of American Music Co.

Christina Eggermont of Music Service plays the *Kramer Krane*.

TECHNICAL CENTER

T.O.P.'s Tarantelli family, (l to r): Matt, Jeff, and dad Tom.

THE ORIGINAL
HOLLYWOOD
SKILL CRANE

Reid Meredith of Hollywood Merchandizers and Mi Mi Kiene of Mardi Gras Plush.

Pop-A-Shot's *Pop-A-Shot*.

Video poker

The video poker game, once considered the stepchild of the industry, has come out of the shadows and into prominence over the past few years. The proliferation of the games at the expo is not surprising, despite some local raids on locations using pokers in a *not for amusement only* manner.

Why the popularity and new acceptance? Video pokers are big earners. Their rise in the industry is due to the video bust. Dropoffs on trendy video games meant operators were seeking a replacement for the big bucks taken in during the boom days. Looking down on card games was no longer fashionable. No one could deny the appeal of the video poker nor the cashbox intake.

Video pokers are not ''shoot 'em ups'' or based on fads. The appeal is universal. Men and women, young and old, all like to play cards. Video pokers last a long time on location because they don't go out of style. There's always variety in the form of new hands showing up on the screen. The luck of the draw can be compelling. Several companies offer interchangeable games, meaning the same cabinet can have a fresh, new look and appeal on location. This all spells good news for operators weary of hauling equipment around.

Following is an alphabetical listing (by company) of video pokers seen at the expo:

Big Ten Electronics displayed its *Draw 88 Poker* with many operator-adjustable features, and a video keno game. Coin Data exhibited three machines with the *Turbo Joker Poker I, Turbo Joker Poker II,* and the *Classic*. Drews Distributing introduced its *Honest Dealer* and exhibited the *Joker Poker 54* and *Super Bonus*.

Foxtronics offered its *Super Poker* that featured interchangeable games such as Dwarf's Den, Keno, and two other card games. Grayhound displayed *Joker Poker, Casino Games*, and *Super Poker*, among others in its extensive line. Gamemasters debuted the countertop *Casino Classic* and showed the *Bones* dice game countertop. GTI showed its brand-new *Regal Draw Poker* and *Draw Poker Dynasty* models.

Kramer exhibited its variety of video pokers, including *Jackpot Bonus, Draw Poker, Riverboat Poker, High Speed Bonus* and the *Little Kramer* video poker countertop. Merit displayed its *Riviera* upright card game and the *Pit Boss II* countertop with 10 games in one (games include Super Draw Poker, Seven Stud, Off To The Races, and more).

SMS debuted several new machines, *Double Dealer, Wild 1, Castles, Hustle/Sure Shot*, and the new *Draw 90*. Other more familiar selections from SMS were *Draw 80, Second Chance, Top Drawer,* and *Hi-Lo Double-Up Joker Poker.*

U.S. Games offered its *Super Duper Casino* (ten games in one or new 15 games in one) unit in five different sizes: standard compact countertop, high impact countertop, full view countertop, mini upright, and full arcade upright.

There isn't a chance of not finding an agreeable piece among the ones listed above. It may be difficult to choose, so check with your distributor and fellow operators to see what game features best suit you and your locations. As an aside, we never hear about any poor quality cabinets on poker games. All have name brand monitors, attractive marquees, and are usually housed in woodgrain cabinets that look good almost anywhere.

> *''If it saves you from buying one 'dog' (of a game) then the trip's worth it.''*

In a unique category of card games were entries from Exidy and Visco Games. Exidy took a different turn in video poker with a nice upright piece, *Showdown*, a poker game with dialogue and an amusing Wild West theme. Visco Games, a newcomer in this arena, showed a video *Roulette*, a poker game titled *The Dealer*, and a slot-like game, *L-Five*.

AMOA is currently campaigning for the legalization of all video card games. The state of Montana is cited as a model to follow in this pursuit, which will probably be an uphill battle. Montana, like all other states that have hammered-out favorable legislation for our industry, employs a lobbyist and has an active state association behind the push for such legislation.

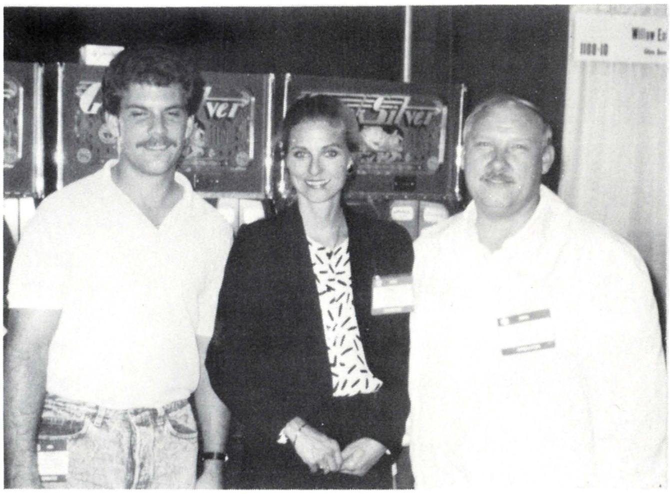
Cranes, rotaries, redemption, and supplies

Cranes have proven their staying power and are supported with one of the largest lists of suppliers in the industry. Plush, jewelry, and novelty items for cranes, rotaries, and redemption equipment are available from over 40 sources. Among the companies showing their latest wares were: Ace Novelty, Acme Premium, A.L.D. Services, Brady Novelty, Dan Brechner, Etone, HMS Monaco, Impressment Plus, Laramie Interests, Lil' Mort Sales, Nadel & Sons, Nancy Sales (Nanco), P.M.I.Toys & Novelties, Prizes!, Rosette, and Superior Toy & Novelty. Crane manufacturers who also deal in plush include Betson, Grayhound, and Kramer.

Cranes are available with all the ''show biz'' extras or just ''plain Jane.'' They are gaining acceptance as skill games in many states where legislation has been passed to declare them legal. It's taken a few years, and progress has been slow, yet steady. The newest wrinkle in cranes is the ''play till you win'' games where a player plunks down $2 and keeps playing the crane until he/she wins a prize. There's no chance of legal problems with this machine, and they are reported to be doing very well in Canada. Showcase exhibited such a unit with its *Animal House* crane. Showcase also had its *Custom Crane* model on display as well as the *Crown Jewels* rotary and the *Action Lotto*, a redemption game that uses balls propelled onto a playfield (two plays for $1).

A new company with experienced personnel, Coin Concepts, displayed several cranes including Crompton's *Classic Champ* and *Carousel Champ*. Central Distributing had the Smart Industries line of *Clean Sweep* cranes, and Grayhound gave cranes a new look with its all metal indoor/outdoor crane, plus showed its well-known *Jumbo Skill Crane* and the *Touchdown Football* egg dispensing machine. Grayhound also had a vending crane with a prize every time at a cost of $2 per play.

Betson displayed the famous *Big Choice* crane, the *Top Choice*, and the economy model *Action Claw*. Newest in Betson's redemption line is *Reel Fun*, a game that awards tokens to players for winning poker hands. It has the appealing design of



Emily Simpson of Showcase explains *Quicksilver* play to Ricky Cheatwood and George Spears of Lone Star Amusement.

Tecmo's *Ninja Gaiden* drew crowds.

Wylie Irwin of Coin Concepts shows *Silver Splash* to Phyllis and Gerald O'Reilly.

By Merit's dart display, (l to r): Howard Smoyer, Bob Hepworth, Stephen Robins, and Mort Ansky.

SMS' Sal Mirando (l) with Mary Lavine and Terry Volk of Bullseye Inc. by *Poker Roll*.

Mark Nemer of Movietime & Video Arcade and Jacob Shemaria of Mexicana De Electromecanicas with Michael Hoffman (r).

GHOULS'N GHOSTS

Ghouls 'N Ghosts from Capcom looks like a winner.

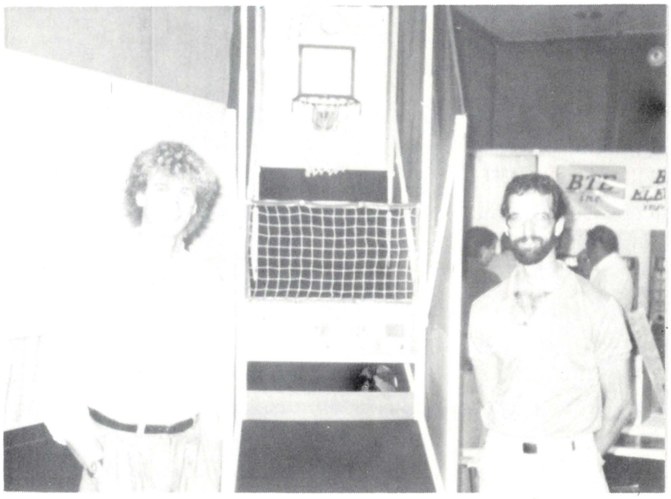
Jim and Marcy Mason of High Country Games stop at the Nancy Sales booth for a merchandise update from Jack Parker.

Donna Maniscalco (Drew's wife) celebrates her birthday at dinner during AMOA.

Gene and Mary Louise Coughlin of Impressment Plus show off some holiday items.

The Show Biz Pizza brigade (l to r): S. Thomas, S. Black, and Gene Cramm.

Hugh Andrews (l) shows off Drew's *Honest Dealer* with Steve Pickel and Tim Caldwell.



Eric Brashear (l) and Mark Pscheid of Adastra, makers of a collapsible basketball game.

By the *Streak Shooter* basketball game, (l to r): Tom Howland, Lee Bryant, and Mike Sappington.

Nintendo's Don James (l) with Jeanne Ballouz of Fabtek and Lamar Forque of Music-Vend.

Hollywood Cranes' Bill Faith with wife Cindy and daughter Angel.

HYATT REGENCY CHICAGO

From left: NSM's Peter Koontz and Russ Strahan (awarded distributor of the year), and George Sammons of Game Sales.

LARAMIE INTERESTS

Tami Morris of Laramie Interests takes an order from Kevin Neading and Rocco Ferruccio of Liberty Vending.

a slot but is a redemption amusement piece. Betson's *Lotto Fun* and *Mating Game* were also in the booth.

Hollywood Merchandizers featured its colorful original *Hollywood Crane* with all the bells and whistles and theatrical lighting that attracts player attention, the large *Monster Crane*, and several budget-minded models. Coastal Amusement Distributors displayed the *Suprize Suprize* pie-shaped crane with talking bear attract mode and the ability to adapt to corner, wall, or center position (if several are placed together). Coastal also had the four-player rotary, *Treasure Island*, and a novelty vendor, *Vegas Vendor*, that features full electronic metering and programmable message ability. *Vegas Vendor* can be used strictly as a vendor or used to trade-up for larger prizes at a location.

SMS brought its *Double Crane* to the show floor for the first time, as well as its *Poker Roll* that combines a roll-down with a poker theme and a 20-inch flat screen color monitor. It's the only roll down that allows a second roll to improve the chances of a win. Really brand new was the *Pop-A-Ball* redemption game that propels balls onto holes in a playfield and gives tickets for high scores.

Among the proven single upright cranes displayed were the *Tiger Paw* by Drews Distributing and the *Kramer Krane* from Kramer. Gamemasters displayed its *Super Spin Out* rotary and the novelty vendor, *Nellie*, that features an elephant attract mode and music.

Coin pushers

This is the category of the future, one that will have a big impact on our industry. These brightly-colored, flashy units are quite large on the average and will probably be the next category of coin-op to come under the scrutiny of local authorities.

In the big pusher category, Coastal Amusement Distributors exhibited *Showboat* that comes in two-, three-, four-, and six-player sizes and the *Circus Circus* hexagonal six-player pusher.

Betson displayed the *New York New York* pusher by Crompton that is available as two- or six-player. It features a New York City skyline backdrop and can award tickets or tokens.

Willow Enterprises, a new name on the block, had *Over The Rainbow*, a token in/token out unit with a skill stop button for each pusher. Coin Concepts showed the *Silver Splash* and *Riviera* by Crompton. *Silver Splash has a six-player playfield, coin/token options, and animated revolving sign. Riviera* is a six-player unit with synthesizer sound effects, super wide playfield, and bonus stacker feature or special token dispense model.

For those desiring a coin pusher of a smaller variety, Showcase offered its *Quicksilver* pachinko coin pusher that accepts quarters or tokens, has a full alarm system, and can be banked together to good effect. Gamemasters introduced its *Sharp Shooter* one-player pusher for use with quarters or tokens. Players choose either the token button to gain tokens or ticket button to obtain tickets to redeem for prizes.

Amusement parks, arcades, and most high-traffic locations with lots of space will certainly be interested in these machines. They are distinguished by high-gloss Formica-covered cabinets, theatrical lighting like some of the cranes, and lighted and mirrored playfields. You just can't miss them, and neither will the rest of the playing public.

Darts

The three dart manufacturers displayed their reliable games with some new features. If there is an award to be given for the most attractive booth, Arachnid would stand tall in the saddle with its huge dart display and flashing lights and multi-monitors—truly a feast for the eyes. Arachnid introduced its Oak Cabinet *Super 6* game that has a video graphics display monitor, television hook up, and convenient dollar bill validator. Master level players will appreciate the *Master 7* with seven game choices—five new ones in addition to the master's favorites of 301 Double In/Double Out and 701.

Arachnid is also credited with the development of the first audible dart game for the sight-impaired.

Merit Industries exhibited its *Pub Time Premier Edition* with a 30-game, built-in library of games such as 201 Cricket, 301 League, No-Score Cricket, and 101 Double In/Double Out. New play features include a 10-game player menu, timed play, and game rules accessible during game play. A *Pub Time Wall Mount* is also available as well as the *Bull Buster* dart game in standard, deluxe, and wall mount models.

Valley continued strong with its *Royal Darts* featuring the international size target and *Cougar Darts* with the American size target and high-density LED overhead player/score display in team/league format. Valley's four-player version of Cricket is an option for both games.

Novelty

Those in search of interesting novelty pieces had a wide selection from which to choose, ranging from pulse and sex testers (the two go hand-in-hand) to coin-op golf and football machines.

Mayoni Enterprises introduced an updated version of *Carmen the Talking Gypsy*, with a microchip-synthesized voice and high-visibility, four-color backlit front panel. Mr. Vend checked in with two new pieces, *Rocko Robot* and *The Talking Clown*, while A.S.C. Corp. offered *Love Meter* and *Are You Compatible?*.

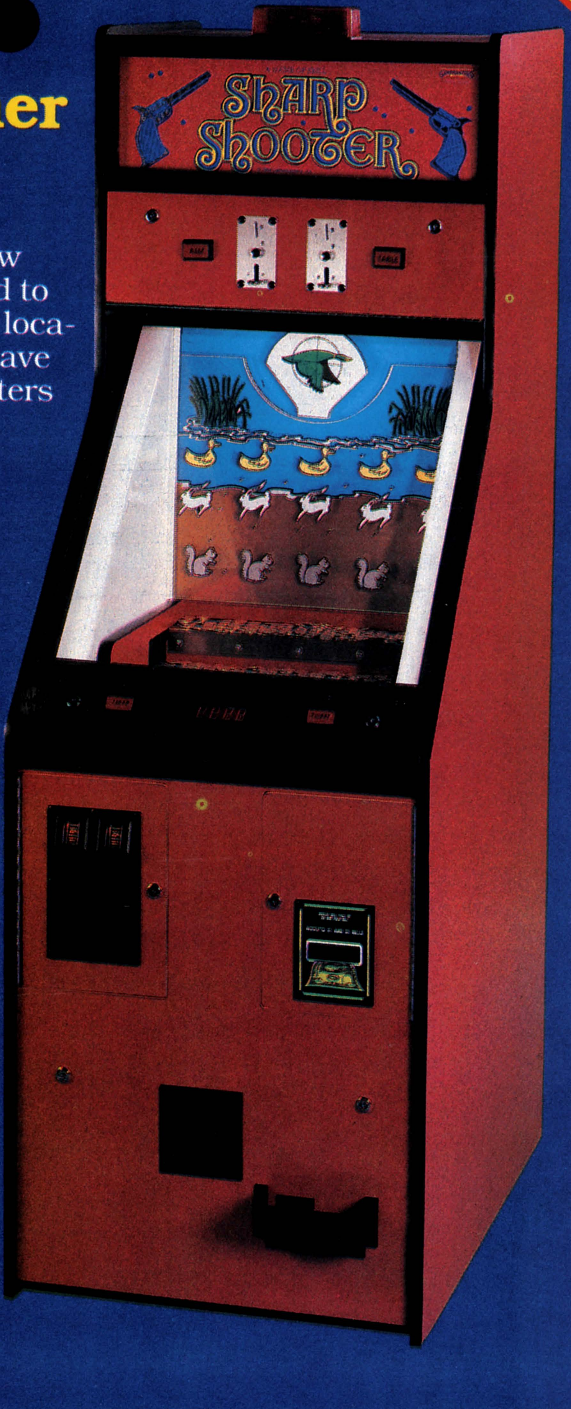
Operators looking for sports-type pieces other than basketball games saw plenty of alternatives at the expo. Intermark Amusements introduced *Touchdown Football*, which tests the player's ability to fire a football through one of three holes. He must gain yardage for points while battling the clock. Intermark also unveiled *Tournament Master* table tennis, *Billi Puck*, a shuffleboard/billiards combo, and *Pro Golf*, a golfing game that allows players to practice their swings. Microwave sensors measure the speed and yardage obtained, along with a display to provide comments on overall performance.

Speaking of golf, Troy M Enterprises is ready to enter the market with *Putt Master*. The game features changing cup placement and green layout with each hole that is played. The format options include "practice course," "match play," and "the skins game." (Note: The game was not quite ready to be exhibited at the show; the finishing touches were being put on at press time.)

The putting game from Mini Pro Golf Inc. received a lot of attention, drawing praise for 18-hole play availability, three different cups to shoot at (with varied point

SHARP SHOOTER

A New Coin Pusher With Skill



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Jon Hafezi of PARS Electronics tests his putting prowess on *Mini Pro Golf*.

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Allme's staff, (l to r): Liz Pelka, Dieter Gould, Anna Idol, and Cliff Jackson in front of *Basketball Challenge*.

BALLS PLAYED
MINI HOOPS

Michael Kay of Video Tech (l) and Bob Rigdon of Troy M Enterprises play *Mini Hoops*.

GREENWALD INDU
KIDDE
MONEY BOXES
SERVICE LOCKS

Tony Liciusi and Paul Newberger display coinboxes at the Greenwald Industries booth.

Pamela Lauer (r) of HAV Amusements meets the Acme Premium staff, (l to r): Susie Fennell, Stephanie Hansen, Jack Kelly, and Georgia Dyer.

VEGAS VENDOR

Tony Matthews and Tony Sussex of Associated Coin with the *Vegas Vendor*.

rewards), and the printout of a hole-by-hole scorecard. The game also comes with a custom advertising software package, allowing local merchants advertising on the screen to have that advertisement appear on every scorecard.

Data East debuted *Slap Shot*, a novelty game suitable for both street and arcade locations. It features one-or two-player action, all-plywood cabinet, realistic hockey game sounds, and custom solid state hardware. There's an optional ticket dispenser available, and a step-up for little players.

Profitable Games Inc. unveiled *The Boxing Machine*, a piece that it hopes will be a "knockout" for operators. The two-player game comes with sound effects, adjustable rounds and pricing, and a Lexan dome to cover the "ring." Johnston Products showed off its latest machine, *Kick'N Catch*, a football-themed offering that combines a novelty piece with candy vending. A candy prize is awarded after every play, a twist which one operator feels will go over well in many locations.

Jaleco, the video company, introduced *Arm Champ*, a hydraulic-powered strength-testing game that would be just-right for certain locations, even though it may carry a high pricetag. It is in the testing stage right now.

Skee-Ball Inc. exhibited its tried-and-true *Skee-Ball*, a game that never seems to go out of style. Troy M Enterprises displayed its bowler, *Super Ball*, available in 10 and 13 foot sizes.

Meltec hopes its new *Big Mouth* gets talked about favorably. The object is to knock out the clown's teeth with balls fired from a "gun." Cardball International Ltd.'s *Card Ball* lets operators have the best of both worlds, as it is a combination of poker and pool.

Card Ball consists of a lighted board with playing cards that are lit as specially marked billiard balls (Jack of Spades, say) drop into the pockets.

Vari-Tech showcased a couple of novelty items, *Dip Bowler* and *Mr. Six Gun*, both older games that still get plenty of attention from operators. ICE's *Turbo Drive*, an electro-mechanical, slot car racing game, received favorable reviews from arcade operators. Williams' introduced a shuffle alley, *Top Dawg*, that records every strike in the backglass. At the end of the game, a bonus of 300 points is awarded for each one.

Countertops

The confinements of space often dictate the need for countertop games and there was no short supply at the show. The new *Genie Games* series from Merit, marketed in conjunction with Gamemasters, is a new countertop system, a dedicated game for the price of a kit. Designed for one or two players, it offers the games *Bullseye*, a skill and strategy game, *Scramble*, a fast-paced word game, and *Pitter Pattern*, a memory teaser. Merit promises an ongoing family of software packages in the future.

One of the big introductions came from Nintendo with its *Play Choice* countertop. *Baseball* is one of the games included in the first selection of five games. More software is promised for the future. Nintendo sees this as an ideal piece for bars, laundromats, and other locations where patrons spend long periods of time.

Several video poker games are available in countertop form and have been mentioned in that category. Other impulse-type games in countertop form, including love meters and memory joggers, are covered in the novelty category. It's easy to be in a total *blur* after a show the magnitude of AMOA. Over 180 exhibitors displayed the new and exciting, the familiar and the reliable. This one ranks as one of the best in attendance (7,000) and variety of equipment. There's bound to be a few just right for you. □

AMOA '88: What's the verdict

by Dennis Atkinson

In the past, the post-AMOA "Best of the Show" picks have always been, I think, a little off balance. Maybe it's the writers, maybe the players, or it could be a *team* that decides what is good and what to buy. Not all games deserve to be mentioned; most do not deserve to be made. So, with an unbiased opinion based on experience, the following contains my comments and picks of the show.

Best Pinball: Data East's *Time Machine*. After some past problems, Data East has got its act together. The playfield action, stereo sound, and an attempt at real backglass art (compared to other companies) makes it a number one game.

Best Driving Game: Taito's *Chase H.Q.*. It has the best earning potential of all the other drivers put together. If Taito would put a brake pedal on it, the game would be perfect. Sega's driver lacked a quality picture, and it wasn't as fun to play when compared to Taito's.

Best Video: There was no best video at the show. The *Defender/Scramble* look is back, along with *Twin Cobra/Galaga*-styled games. Out of them all, Midway's, followed by Sega's, looked the best. *P.O.W.* and *Double Dragon II* offer more of the same violence, though *P.O.W.* has already proven itself to be an earner.

Exidy's *Showdown* (the universal kit) gives poker a needed new look. It's different and fun to play, but it's a challenging video game, not a regular poker. Data East's *Robo Cop* has a potential for being a good return on investment.

A big decline in the number of cranes was noticeable, while the number of new novelty machines has increased. Hopefully, this trend will continue. Overall, the majority of the games at the show were very low in quality, both in the design and the graphics.

There is no excuse for the amount of high-tech garbage on display. Some games will earn money in spite of themselves, but the R.O.I. will be as low as the life span of the game is short. Operators are still very choosy, and they can afford to be. After seeing the new product lines for '89, the term "closeout" will be heard more than once.

Dennis Atkinson owns and operates Memory Lane Arcade in Frankenmuth, Mich. □

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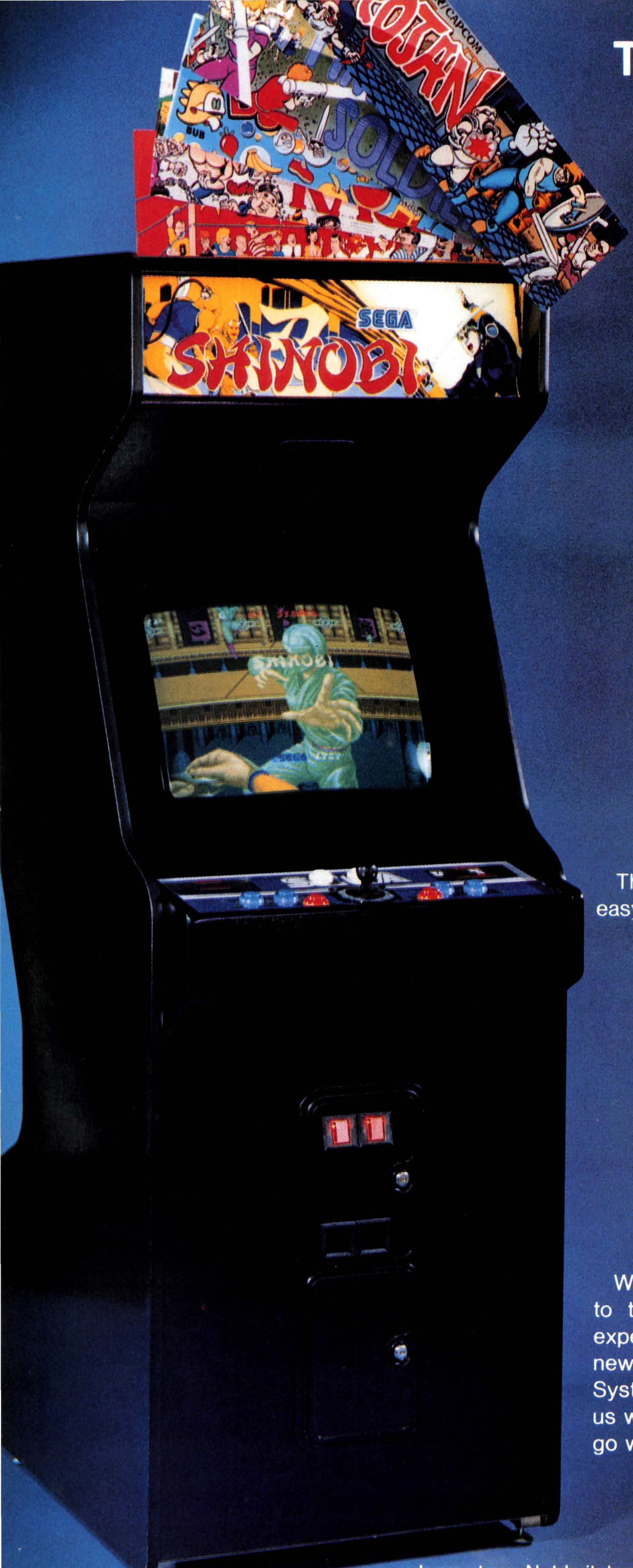

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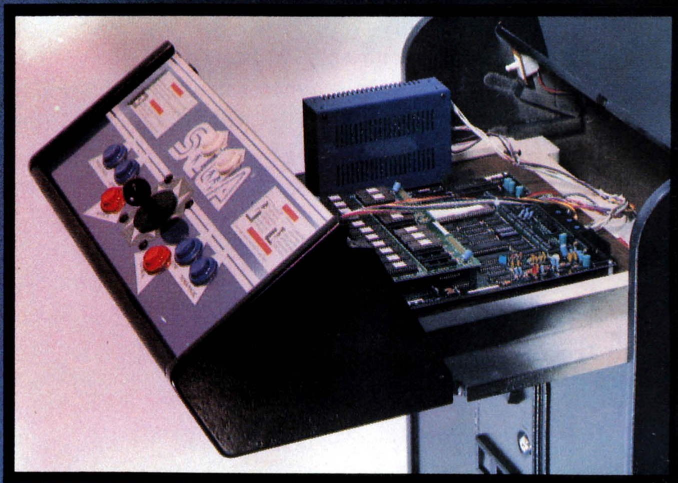

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Innovators, Not Imitators

Advice from a small operator

A seminar for the small operator by the small operator was conducted by Ken Rensink, K&D Amusements in Chico, Calif., a typical small operator. He addressed a group of 30 small operators about their unique problems and concerns. This was the first year for the seminar, and attendees felt it was a worthwhile session. Most of the advice, though geared towards smaller operators, could apply to anyone wanting a successful business.

Ken led attendees through 77 tips for the small operator beginning appropriately enough with tip number one: NEVER PANIC! He then added that the whole is more than the sum of the parts; put on, take off, and do without. He then talked of promoting your business; the first inexpensive way is with a proper business card.

He pointed out that a business card is a cost effective form of advertising. He stressed the fact that operators should keep their cards current — not scratching through an obsolete phone number or address before leaving the card with someone. He recommended an article on business cards that appeared in the August issue of Play Meter (if anyone wants a copy, please call Play Meter 504/488-7003).

He added that company stationery is not expensive but makes an impressive display. A logo can add to the image (Ken uses an owl on his stationery and business cards.)

Speaking of image, Ken related an incident when a customer at one of his locations remarked that his truck was very dirty. Since then, Ken said he is more conscious of how a dirty truck can affect image. He used this example to urge operators to keep their vehicles clean at all times, saying, ''A clean truck adds to the overall demeanor of your business.''

He spoke at length on making a good impression. Some ideas include donating machines to charity and making sure the local paper knows about it. ''If you contact the paper, sometimes you can even get your picture in the publication and that certainly helps,'' he noted. Another important point is taking time to talk shop with customers. ''My wife goes to a doctor who makes her feel like she is the only patient in the building, even if there are 20 other patients in the waiting room. We should do that with our customers, too. Anyone can run in, count the quarters, and leave. Take time to know and talk with your customers.''

Frank Seninsky and Ken Rensink talk after their respective seminars.

Ken then gave some advice on rotating games. ''When locating games, think like the players.'' He added that all games are not created equal, so rotate by classification. ''If a sports game is doing well in a particular location, replace it with a newer sports game,'' he suggested. He also hinted that it's a good idea to plan some rotation three to six months in advance. ''If a driving game is doing well in a certain location, you can probably figure you will be replacing it with another driving game, so plan ahead.''

Ken addressed getting along with competitors. ''We are in the people business, and it's normal not to get along with everyone. However, if no one likes you, then maybe you should take a hard look at yourself. Your business will be better off if you have a good working relationship with others.''

He strongly suggested taking advice from larger operators. Citing this illustration, Ken said, ''When *Dragon's Lair* came out, I couldn't wait to buy one. A larger operator told me that if I wanted to make money on a *Dragon's Lair*, don't buy one! Boy, did he save me a lot of money and headaches.''

Further advice concerned bank loans and business plans. ''Having a business plan increases your chances of getting a bank loan. Never apply for a loan without one.'' He then pointed out the importance of a banker, an insurance agent, and an attorney. ''But before you find the above three, find a good barber,'' he quipped, indicating the importance of being well-groomed and dressing appropriately.

One of his last pieces of wisdom may be one of the most important: ''Take the wife on a vacation.'' Ken pointed out that many wives don't like certain aspects of the business, so operators should make the time to spend with their wives *not talking business*. ''When all is said and done, all you have is your friends and family,'' he concluded.

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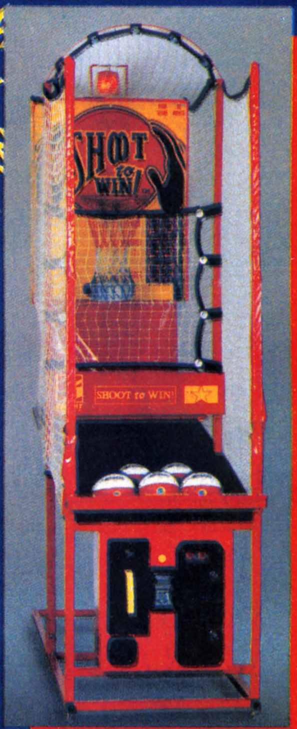

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Parallel issue dominates legislative update seminar

A room jammed with operators and distributors sat anxiously, waiting for the first sparks to fly. Though it was billed as a legislative update seminar, everyone knew that the parallel board issue would dominate.

Moderated by Frank "The Crank" Seninsky, the panel included AAMA executive vice president Bob Fay, AMOA government relations liaison Bob Wilbur, former AMOA president Dick Hawkins, Red Baron's Bill Beckham, and AAMA president Frank Ballouz. Those in the audience wondered if this year's seminar would resemble the one in 1987, when it digressed into a session of name-calling and innuendo.

Seninsky set the ground rules right away: there would be no name-calling or yelling from the audience. In short, civility would reign, or the show would be over. Still, fireworks were expected.

Wilbur spoke first, updating operators on such topics as the Berne Convention, the 100th anniversary of the jukebox, and the passage in Congress of National Jukebox Week before the AMOA Expo. He added that AMOA would be working closely with AAMA on dollar coin legislation in Congress during 1989.

Then it was Fay's turn. Feeling like one of the early Christians facing a hungry pack of Roman lions, Fay eased the mood with a deft maneuver. He handed New York operator Bill Johnston a note to read, one that probably summed up the feelings of operators across the country, Fay speculated. Turning to Fay, Johnston recited the quote of the show: "Fay, Beckham beat your ass!," referring to his victory in the lawsuit against Taito. The audience roared with laughter and applause, breaking any lingering tension.

Fay urged operator/manufacturer unity, especially in January when the dollar coin hearings take place. "We looked like idiots fighting up in Washington over the parallel issue," he said. "The Senate should be easy, but we're in for a tough fight in the House. We need to find some middle ground within the three proposed bills."

As for parallels, Fay reiterated what most manufacturers have been saying: there simply are not that many parallels out there, and the problem is and always has been counterfeits. He planned to go to Korea after the show for a conference on counterfeiting. Representatives from other countries will also be there, and Fay is hopeful that some headway can be made with the Koreans to impede the counterfeiting menace.

He also made an important announcement: AAMA's official position is that it will do nothing about parallels. It is going to be up to individual manufacturers to pursue operators.

Beckham was next, and he didn't mince any words. He doubted whether the industry could truly be united until another major issue was settled.

"We won't be united until the manufacturers solve the dedicated versus kit problem," Beckham said. "I'd rather not have to fool with parallels if I had a choice of buying dedicated or kit. We want to be treated like the rest of the operators in the world. There's a civil war going on here."

Beckham then turned his attention to the AAMA's "intimidation tactics," or, coining an acronym, "F.U.D." (Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt). He said the manufacturers started the fight, pointing to FBI raids that led to many operators going out of business.

"Some big manufacturers and distributors are trying to make the U.S. industry the way they want it to be, not how it ethically should be," Beckham claimed. "The U.S. subsidiaries of Japanese manufacturers are trying to force dedicateds on operators so they can make more money for themselves.

"F.U.D. was and still is the tactic used by AAMA and Fay to discourage the buying of parallels," he continued. "And the case proved they're legal. Saying the decision only applies to me is like saying the Miranda decision (must be read your rights upon arrest) only applied to Miranda himself. AAMA is thriving on F.U.D., but you guys have nothing to worry about. Think of the millions of dollars we as a group could've saved instead of having to

Bill Beckham

A full house listens with great interest during the legislative update seminar.

buy dedicated all this time.''

Beckham predicted that if operators win ''the ultimate fight,'' it may get to the point where Japanese manufacturers will use their American subsidiary as a direct sales outlet to the operator.''This may lessen the role of the distributors in the triangle as it now exists,'' Beckham said. ''I hope it doesn't come to that, but it might.'' He received a standing ovation at the conclusion of his speech.

Operator Joel Weinberg of Cameron Musical Indust. Ltd. pressed Ballouz as to each individual manufacturer's position on parallels. He and other operators wanted to know why Ballouz was the only manufacturer present at the seminar, saying each of them should've been there to announce whether they'll go after operators or not. Ballouz said he couldn't speak for the others, but as president of Fabtek he assured them that he would not.

One other point was brought out: an operator cannot be hit with criminal liability unless *intent* can be proved, i.e., a jail term for intentionally operating counterfeit boards. Distributors commonly sign disclaimers saying that they've sold the operators parallel boards, and such is the operators' understanding. Different criteria exists for civil liability, however. ☐

Technology and customers dictate jukebox treatment

Maximizing jukebox income is on everyone's mind these days as our attention is focused on them more and more, due to the celebration of the centennial and advancements in jukebox technology. A panel of operators in the thick of jukebox operation shared their ideas with an audience eager for fresh thoughts on this entertainment vehicle.

The panel included Jim Stansfield, Stansfield Vending, Jim Hayes, Gem Music & Vending, Emery Kertesz, Lansdale Amusement; and Manley Lawson, Lawson Music.

Some of the most memorable comments, and ones that amused the audience with an ''I've been there'' chuckle, came from Kertesz. He talked about location owners with ''ten-inch cigars and a bad attitude,'' who could be very demanding. Some locations were so difficult, he said they practically wanted you to throw in bicycles for their kids as a condition to retaining the location.

He cautioned operators to remember that we are dealing with an educated consumer. ''Most people have a good system at home,'' he noted, ''and they expect it on the outside.'' Jukeboxes used to be foreground entertainment. Then live entertainment entered locations, DJ's, then televised sporting events—all competing with the jukebox for customer time.

Kertesz found lots of old jukeboxes on the route when he started with Lansdale four years ago. They were pushed into corners, covered with dust, and produced sounds ''like the music was being played under a pile of blankets.'' No attention had been given to these boxes in a long time.

''The cashpan never lies,'' said Kertesz. ''Feedback is immediate.'' His approach has been to invest in aesthetically-pleasing jukeboxes, offer big screens interfacing with the system, and strategically place the box and arrange the audio distribution systems to best advantage. This means a full entertainment system that costs a lot of money but offers earning potential that far outweighs the cost. Take the jukebox out of the dinosaur category, he advised, seek out an audio and visual consulting firm, and experience good ROI for your efforts. He reminded the audience that the ''jukebox is the entertainer that pays you,'' and that customers want to be their own DJ's today and will carefully ''shop'' your jukebox.

Lawson was clearly an advocate of CD jukeboxes, noting that they were not an easy effort, but a profitable one. He has been able to obtain two-year contracts with CD jukeboxes, and placed them only in locations where the owner has agreed to eliminate any competing entertainment. Lawson advised specializing in one manufacturer's equipment in order to have complete parts inventories.

Hayes believes in two ways to maximize

After the operator's jukebox seminar (l to r): Emery Kertesz of Lansdale Music, John Bell of Bell's Music, and John Estridge of Southern Games.

profits: take better care of the equipment, and use promotions to create awareness. Start with radio stations for a joint promotion, he suggested. Capitalize on the many articles on jukeboxes appearing in the press nationwide. Have your locations participate in the promotion as well. Hayes is presently involved in a promotion to celebrate the 100th birthday of the jukebox in his area and is scheduled to give away a new Rowe jukebox. Another idea on promoting your jukebox on location: feature an artist of the month, and put stand-up cards on tables in a location identifying hit songs by that artist.

Jim Stansfield, a second generation jukebox operator, offered this revenue-increasing idea: use CD jukeboxes on a rental system and get the box as close to the till as possible. He focused attention on locations and said that some labeled as poor locations may have equipment misplaced, mispriced, and mis-speakered; therefore, totally *missed*. Another thought: increase income by changing the price per play. Install $1 acceptors on new equipment. Also, make frequent stops at your locations.

In response to a question from the audience regarding how Stansfield handles record requests from locations, he suggested sending the staff member responsible for ordering records to the location. They need to talk to key personnel at the location who know who the good customers are and what they want. If the location is deemed one that can do more than its cashbox says, investigate. Make the impersonal become personal. It's hard to individually program jukeboxes from the office. ☐

A full house greeted panelists discussing maximizing jukebox income.

Perception is tops in crane operation

A trio of knowledgeable practitioners made up the panel for the seminar on maximizing crane income, one that played to a standing room only crowd again this year. If there was one central message in this year's seminar it was that perception is everything. When the playing public perceives a crane as clean, operated with a fair chance of winning, and stocked with well-arranged quality prizes, there is less likelihood of difficulty with players or regulatory agencies.

The panel consisted of Randy Chilton, Chilton Vending; Bob Snyder, Bob Snyder and Associates; and Frank Seninsky, Alpha Omega. Each took a turn detailing practical advice based on their own experiences with cranes.

Chilton advocated frequent visits to a location to insure proper placement of plush in the machines. He prefers to have

Discussing crane strategy are (l to r): Dick Prutting of Hudson Valley Amusement, Randy Chilton of Chilton Vending, Marty Ondricka of River City Amusement, and Pete Martelli of Texas Amusement Machine Co.

only members of his staff handle crane stocking and does not take the chance of leaving it to the location. He travels to locations as much as four times a week depending on the volume of the location. Paying close attention to his machines and locations has paid off for him.

Snyder addressed legal questions and advised, "When public confidence erodes you're in trouble and will get complaints." He likened the crane to a trophy case or a pet shop window. He stressed that each item must be attainable to the players, lighting must be carefully directed to the prizes and not toward the player, and cleanliness is of utmost importance to maintain the illusion of a trophy case to the public. He suggested that operators keep a maintenance log for better tracking of crane condition.

Seninsky offered practical ideas on keeping cranes in good condition by using a little bit of 3-in-1 oil on the string, say every 5,000 plays, to help it last longer. He emphasized "dressing" the crane properly by putting more valuable items inside for player appeal. He suggested testing the crane and its claw adjustment in the shop and making sure prizes can be won at a good ratio.

Unlike Chilton, Seninsky cannot get to every location several times a week. He has been successful with a program directly involving the location. Seninsky gives a key to the location's manager or another member of the location's staff and charges them with the responsibility of filling the crane. In return, that person receives five percent of the net for taking care of the crane. This encourages creative ideas for increasing the crane's take, and the ideas come from an individual who sees what the customers like.

As usual, there was an SRO crowd for the crane seminar.

Seninsky keeps an inventory of items dispensed and feels there's no problem with showing the location the actual cost of plush, then splitting the take above that figure. He said that his locations trust the invoices of the prizes he puts in the cranes.

Several questions from the audience prompted discussions of the impact of the larger claws, attention-getting prizes like gift certificates, and which locations are the most profitable.

At first, when larger claw units (jumbo-type cranes) were introduced, operators put small claws inside these large capacity units and took advantage of the prize area to reduce time spent returning to the location. Now jumbo cranes are appreciated for themselves and are credited with better revenues. It was even mentioned that the jumbo crane on 50-cent play can mean a better commission deal with the location because the value of the items is perceived as higher.

Suction-cup plush items on the inside of the cranes have proven to be attention-getting. As always, cash is a no-no, as are tickets to big sports events or large denomination gift certificates. In time, regulatory agencies will react. There should be no hidden surprises. Money and obvious high-value items will make the machine look like a gambling device, and the level of acceptance will diminish.

If gift certificates are to be viable, it was advised that they must be of low value. Their placement in the crane should be well-publicized in the location and should be color-coded so that all the players are aware of it.

Rotaries were discussed, but almost dismissed as not productive enough. Seninsky noted that other than jewelry, the industry has not happened on other merchandise suitable for rotaries. It was generally agreed that nothing comes close to a crane for the biggest splash on the market. ☐

AMOA insurance seminar

Daniel Seltzer, vice president of the independent insurance agency Cohen-Seltzer Inc., led a Friday morning insurance seminar discussing the exclusive property and casualty business insurance program that has been in place for AMOA members since May 1988.

Cohen-Seltzer is working in conjunction with The Travelers Insurance Co. on the program, which has led to the recategorization of operators from the previous "vendors" category. This has meant significant savings for operators nationwide, especially route operators, Seltzer said.

The operator fills out his own particulars on a questionnaire and sends it to Cohen-Seltzer. From there, the information is sent to The Travelers, which works up a proposal. The cost will vary from operator to operator, of course, depending on individual situations: the number of trucks, the number of locations, dollars in sales, loss experience, workers' compensation costs, the amount of equipment, route vs. arcade operator, etc.

Daniel Seltzer

Seltzer estimates that as of now, for every 100 proposals that are sent out, 30 get signed up. The more operators who sign up, the better leverage Cohen-Seltzer has with The Travelers, he said. Interested operators can call (800) 545-2667 for more information on the program. ☐

Outstanding Banquet: "It's All On The Jukebox"

Since everyone is looking for the "hit of the show" after AMOA Expo '88, try this one: the AMOA Banquet with its outstanding floor show, good food, and audience participation that reached a level never seen before at this annual event.

The mood was definitely festive, with attendees dressed in their finest, tuxedos and evening attire being standard for officers and members of the board of directors. First, AMOA President Wally Bohrer read a letter from President Reagan announcing October 30-Nov. 5 as National Jukebox Week.

With the theme "It's All On The Jukebox," the evening's schedule was filled with award presentations and entertainment from famous names of the past and present. Topping the awards list were Century Awards to the jukebox manufacturers, the first one going to David Rockola for his lifetime dedication to the jukebox. Rowe, NSM/Loewen America, Seeburg, and Wurlitzer also received awards.

In the game category, Taito's *Chase H.Q.* was selected best new equipment on

Guy Mitchell croons to the audience during the floor show.

Chubby Checker, "Mr. Twist" himself.

Operators enjoying the banquet (l to r): R.A. Green, III of Rosemary Coin Machine, John, Jr. and John Estridge, Sr. of Southern Games, and Russell Love of Royal Vending.

Century awards were presented to the jukebox manufacturers (l to r): Jerry Reeves, Wurlitzer; Joel Friedman, Rowe; David Rockola, Rock-Ola; Joe Pankus and Nick Hindman, Seeburg; and Russ Strahan, NSM/Loewen America.

the expo floor. In the "most played" categories, winners were: Taito's *Double Dragon*, dedicated video; Williams' *Cyclone*, pinball; Sega's *Shinobi*, kit; Sega's *After Burner*, most innovative game; and Valley's Pool Table, best other game.

The emcee and first performer for the evening was Eddie Cash, who had an uncanny ability to sound like a number of famous musicland personalities, such as Jackie Wilson and Elvis Presley.

Other entertainers included Guy Mitchell (who has 19 gold records to his credit), Holly Dunn, The Tokens, Bobby Bare (of country and western fame), the team of Boy Meets Girl, and the evening's finale: Chubby Checker, "Mr. Twist." Checker invited audience participation as he strolled through the crowd and invited guests on stage.

Audience participants included Joe Dillon and Patti Hawkins; but the one who will be most remembered is Beverly Rondeau, who did a steamy "shake" that sent the audience into a wild round of applause.

According to Wally Bohrer, the entire show was being recorded for a possible television special in the future. He credited Sam Atchley of Ft. Worth, Tex., for his professional handling of the show's taping.

Rising star awards were presented to K.T. Oslin for female vocalist, Rick Astley and Ricky Van Shelton for male vocalists, and Guns n' Roses for group. The best pop record of the year went to "I've Had The Time Of My Life" by Bill Medley and Jennifer Warnes; best country record of the year went to "Tennessee Flat Top Box" by Rosanne Cash; and best rhythm and blues record of the year went to "Pink Cadillac" by Natalie Cole. The cigarette vending machine promotion award went to R.J. Reynolds Sales Co. ☐

The C&N Sales team (l to r): Bob Lund, Tami Norberg-Paulsen, and Tim Norberg.

A.M.O.A
It's All On the Jukebox!

Wally Bohrer (l) and Clyde Knupp present a Century Award to David Rockola.

Changing of the guard

Wally Bohrer presided over his last meeting as AMOA president at this Saturday morning gathering, passing the mantle to new president Clyde Knupp. Bohrer touched on various issues and achievements tackled during his tenure, including industry standardization, the advent of regional educational seminars, the 100th anniversary of the jukebox, and the need for dollar coin legislation in Washington.

Knupp said he was anxious to get started as AMOA president, to build on AMOA programs already in place for operators while implementing newer ones for 1989.

There were elections for a new set of officers and board of directors (see this month's News Section), along with a host of awards given out to operators. Former AMOA president and 18-year board member Wes Lawson was honored for distinguished service, as was Fred Granger. Russ Mawdsley accepted the award on behalf of Granger.

Bohrer was given a plaque as outgoing president; he will continue to serve on the government relations committee. Awards were also handed out to those families with more than 50 years in the jukebox business, and there were plenty of them.

Thomas Noonan of Billboard Magazine addressed the group, saying 1988 was the best year ever for gross sales of records. He talked about coming trends in the 1990s: more CD jukeboxes, CD singles, the potential death of vinyl 45s, and the threat of DAT (digital audio tape) to the music industry. "But the future looks bright for the jukebox industry into the '90s and beyond," Noonan said.

Dr. Herb True of Notre Dame University, who is a combination author/professor/psychologist/humorist, entertained operators with his witty presentation on how to succeed and better manage their businesses. ☐

Wally Bohrer (r) presents awards to outgoing vice presidents, (l to r), Vincent Storino, Gene Urso, and Ross Todaro.

Ed and Lucille Puzia of AAA Vendors Ltd. in Milwaukee were part of a large group presented awards for more than 50 years in the jukebox business. They've been in it for 57 years.

Sam and Shirley Strangis of Morgan Amusements in McKeesport, Pa. He was presented a certificate of appreciation for his service as a member of the AMOA board of directors.

New board members are introduced to the audience.

View of the Show

by Bill Johnston, Johnston's General Store

I arrived in Chicago Tuesday evening for the fall AMOA and went out to dinner with Sharon (the Vendress) Johnston for Mexican food at Hat Dance (where a potent margarita and excellent dishes are to be found). We followed with drinks at Sabrina while speculating on what the show would bring.

We got a chance for a sneak preview on Wednesday before heading out to Second City for comedy. We heard that Bally's Aladdin's Castle was operating games in a place near the hotel, so off we were to the Baja Beach Club for two floors of arcade games and brews. Feeling we had put in our business time we trekked down to Dick's Last Resort for blues piano combo, beer from Africa, and the tastiest chicken breast sandwich in a basket.

Bright and early on Thursday we were up for the Frank (Seninsky) and Todd (Erickson) seminar on money saving tips. As an operator, I am always interested in hearing how others save money and Frank and Todd are two operators I admire. The seminar was valuable and I would recommend it to all.

We headed onto the floor to ask Taito's new president, Joe Dillon, to license parallel games. I connected with Bob Fay and Bill Kidwell to discuss the complex issues of parallel games and tried to confirm the authenticity of my parallel *P.O.W.'s,* which had just cleared customs. At every step of the way, I'd bump into friends, operators, distributors, and the parallel distributors. Everyone awaited fire and brimstone with Bill Beckham and Bob Fay at the Friday morning legislative update seminar.

The suspense was building for that session, and I warned moderator Frank "The Crank" about the undercurrent. Although the show floor was open, I hadn't played any games because I was too busy yakkin' about parallels.

Friday morning Bill Kidwell phoned and offered to show me the knockoff *P.O.W.* PCB's — there were two kinds. I examined those boards at the seminar. The seminar kicked off with legislative updates on promotion, the dollar coin, Berne Convention, and finally, what everyone had been waiting to hear — parallel games.

Bob Fay announced that there had been no enforcement against parallels since January, when Beckham filed suit. Beckham won the parallel case against Taito, although Taito is appealing the decision. Beckham's attorney, Richard Stern, spoke about the proper use of generic marquees (don't copy the graphics or typeface, and give the game the name by which it is known in the attract mode). Bill Beckham reiterated his purpose in entering the suit, stressing kits for all operators in America since kits are available elsewhere in the free world. He explained that he's furious to see mostly dedicated games being offered again. Parallel distributors want to remove serial numbers from PCB's to protect their supply lines; Bob Fay says it's OK. (Very intense stuff; buy a tape of the seminar and hear it for yourself.)

I enjoyed meeting people from everywhere who had been involved with the parallels and their win with Beckham. Operators want kits whether they operate 90 games or 5,000 games. As operators, we share a common bond; give us kits!

Sucked down brews for hours at Rumors, and then out on the town with Premier's Bad Girls. While hospitality suite-ing at Capcom I found *Mr. Do!* himself Bill Cravens and the president of Capcom, USA, Yoshihito (George) Nakayama, who listened intently to kit ideas for successfully merchandising the Capcom product, including its absolutely stunning *Ghouls 'n Ghosts.*

Could it be Saturday already? I finally saw some games worth 25 cents or more. Here are my picks of AMOA: *Chase H.Q.*/Taito was the best dedicated car at the show. *Robo Cop*/Data East, although dedicated, looks like a winner — wait for legs. *Cabal*/Fabtek is a super kit. The trakball interfaces nicely, says Sharon. *P.O.W.*/SNK is a dedicated game (our heroes have some power in this).

Here's another I liked but am still waiting to see the value: *Double Dragon II-The Revenge*/Technos-Romstar is a dedicated (more of the same? Wait for legs).

And in the parts department, in answer to my incessant begging, I saw a dummy button—a dead 1-13/16-inch long button—to fill that extra hole when you change from *Double Dragon* to *Dragon Ninja* and need to plug the hole as well as hold the push-three switch for the next kit use. Our WICO boys have come up with a nice and close feel in their new microswitch joystick — check with your sales rep for part numbers. No monkey at this WICO booth just a shoeshine girl.

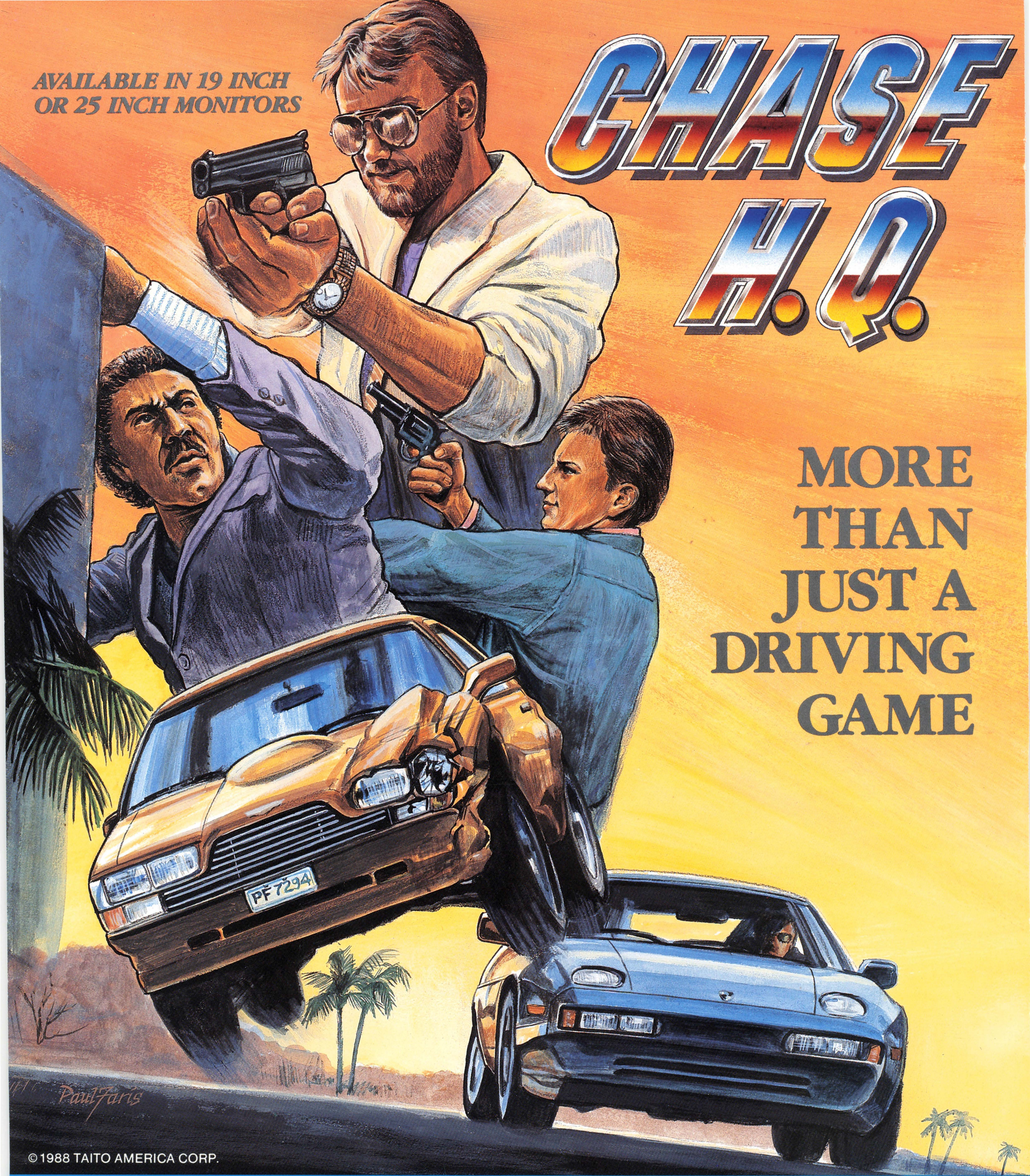
Don Shimel at J-S Sales enjoyed getting heavy orders on his new microswitch pushbutton (barrel style) with changeable legend name that appears under the colored transparent pushbutton. It's like a Happ button with a see-thru top and changeable jump-punch-etc., and this adds class to a generic control panel! Several colors are available, and this item ships soon. Phone sales rep Jim Royston at 1-800-634-7134 for price and availability.

Out to dinner with a fellow distributor and his lovely better half, and then up half the night yakkin as usual. Where is the video game biz heading, the future of the American operator — you know, those late night conversations that always go best with a Corona beer with a lime wedge . . .

We flew home Sunday after a late checkout and trying to play bump with United Airlines. Since it wasn't a sell out, we got home in time to visit with our two favorite video game players, Scott (6) and Molly (10) Johnston. G'nite! ☐

AVAILABLE IN 19 INCH OR 25 INCH MONITORS

CHASE H.Q.



MORE THAN JUST A DRIVING GAME

© 1988 TAITO AMERICA CORP.

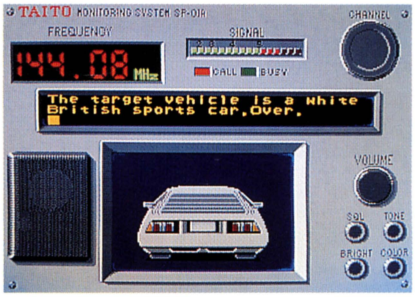
TAITO

"This is Nancy at Chase Headquarters... We've got an emergency here... Ralph, the Idaho Slasher is fleeing toward the suburbs... The target vehicle is a white British sports car... Over."

"10-4 Nancy... We read you loud and clear..."

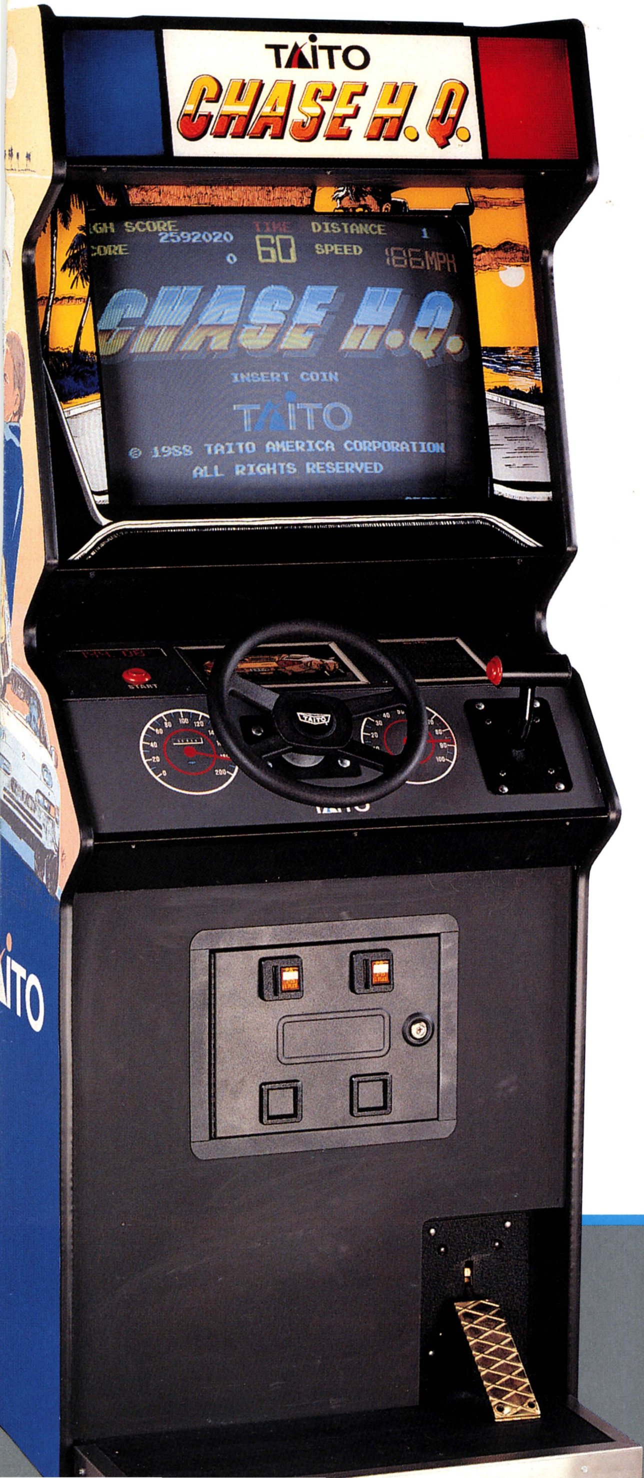
AN ALL NEW ACTION PACKED DRIVING GAME

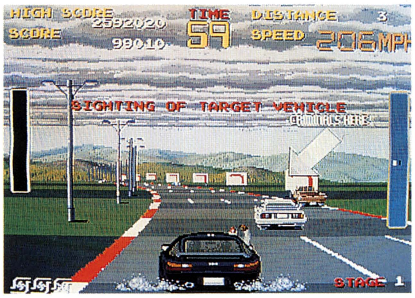
The action begins when the player slams the pedal down in Taito America's extraordinary new driving game, CHASE H.Q. In a market flooded with "race to the finish" driving games, CHASE H.Q. offers it's player something completely different. The action is fast-paced and challenging. It takes the player on a high speed chase through downtown streets and country back-roads to run-down and capture wanted criminals.


TAITO MONITORING SYSTEM SP-01R
FREQUENCY
144.08 MHz
SIGNAL
CALL
BUSY
CHANNEL
VOLUME
SQL
TONE
BRIGHT
COLOR

The target vehicle is a white British sports car.Over.

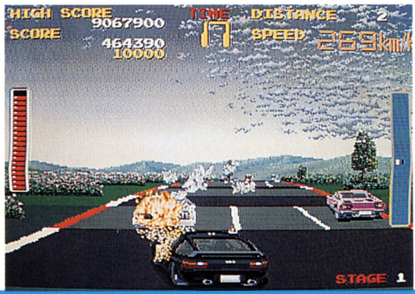
The player joins special detectives Tony Gibson and his partner Raymond Brody in their turbo powered sports car chasing and apprehending some of the world's most wanted criminals. The chase begins with a radio transmitted message from headquarters. Once having received the orders, the player takes off in his turbo-powered sports car, using radar and the occasional assistance of a helicopter to locate the criminal. Radio messages from headquarters are heard throughout the chase to assist the player with helpful hints and comments on his performance. An on-screen timer displays the time limit given to apprehend each criminal.


TAITO
CHASE H.Q.
HIGH SCORE 2592020
SCORE 0
TIME 60
DISTANCE 1
SPEED 186MPH
CHASE H.Q.
INSERT COIN
TAITO
© 1988 TAITO AMERICA CORPORATION
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
START


HIGH SCORE 2592020
SCORE 99010
TIME 59
DISTANCE 3
SPEED 206MPH
SIGHTING OF TARGET VEHICLE
STAGE 1

Once the criminal's car is sighted, the lights begin to flash, the siren is sounded and the timer is extended.

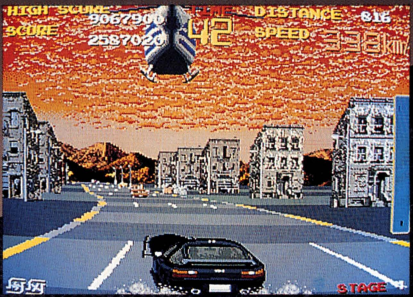
To successfully apprehend the criminal, the player must repeatedly crash into the criminal's car, completely immobilizing it. A gauge indicating the amount of damage to the criminal's car is displayed on the left side of the screen. With each hit, the measure on the gauge is increased. When the gauge is full, the car stops and the criminals are arrested.


HIGH SCORE 9067900
SCORE 464390
10000
TIME 17
DISTANCE 2
SPEED 269km/h
STAGE 1

DIMENSION: 25 INCH: 27⅝″ W
29¾″ D
72″ H
19 INCH: 23⅞″ W
29¾″ D
72″ H

If all this sounds easy... think again! Taito America's CHASE H.Q. offers the player a challenge never before seen in any driving game. It's a race against time with the safety of the world at stake!

And if the player runs out of time, he can continue the chase with CHASE H.Q.'s Continue Play Option.


HIGH SCORE 9067900
SCORE 2587020
TIME 42
DISTANCE 816
SPEED 338km
STAGE

POLICE DEPARTMENT
GENERAL REPORT FO
TIME OF OCCURRENCE
6:5PM 11:08 PM
DATE & TIME POLICE ARRIVED
OFF. CODE
9146
Weslock
JIM EDGAR SECRETARY OF STATE
05-11-91
1. HOSP.
POLICE
ILLINOIS

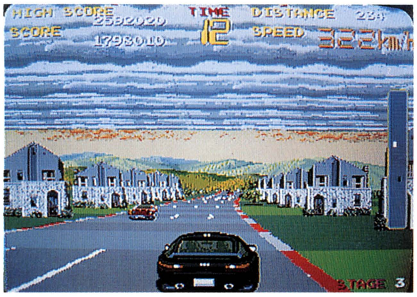
"Blaaam... Baaang... Booom... He was getting away... we cracked him again and again... we hit the Turbo and slammed into him one last time... we got him... his car was on fire... he had no choice but to stop...."
DETECTIVE TONY GIBSON

TAITO

How To Play:

- The player is driving an unmarked patrol car and must chase and apprehend various criminals according to headquarter radio contact.

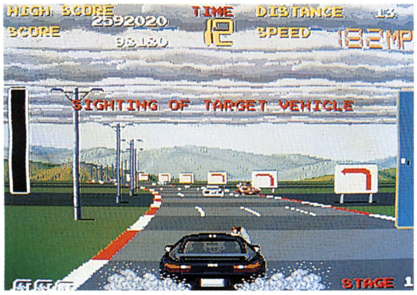
- CHASE H.Q. is different from previous driving games in that the player must do more than win a race. He must locate the target vehicle, catch up to it, and put it out of commission by repeatedly crashing into it.

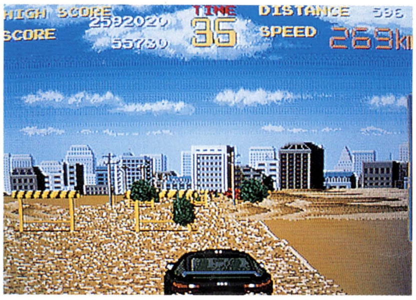

HIGH SCORE 2592020
SCORE 1798010
TIME 12
DISTANCE
SPEED 322km/h
STAGE 3

- The distance from the suspect car and player car is shown on the map at the right side of the screen.

- When the player has caught up to the suspect car, the dome light is placed on the patrol car, the siren is sounded and the timer is extended.

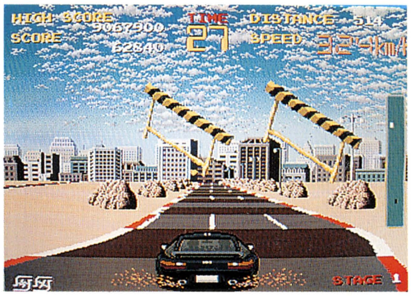
- During the extended time period, the player must continuously crash into the target vehicle until the damage meter on the left side of the screen has indicated the vehicle is immobilized.


HIGH SCORE 2592020
SCORE
TIME 12
DISTANCE 13
SPEED 183MP
SIGHTING OF TARGET VEHICLE
STAGE 1


HIGH SCORE 2592020
SCORE 55780
TIME 35
DISTANCE 596
SPEED 263km

- The player is given 3 bursts of turbo charge in each round which is activated by the shift knob button. The game ends when the timer reaches zero or the player has cleared all five rounds.

- The player may continue the game with CHASE H.Q.'s optional "Continue Play" feature.


HIGH SCORE 9067900
SCORE 62840
TIME 27
DISTANCE 514
SPEED 324km/h
STAGE 1

Explanation of Rounds:

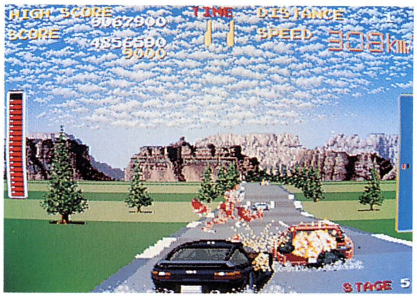
Round 1. . . . White Sports Car

Round 2. . . . Yellow Sports Car

Round 3. . . . Silver Sports Car

Round 4. . . . Blue Sports Car

Round 5. . . . Reported as Unknown!


HIGH SCORE 9067900
SCORE 4856580
TIME 11
DISTANCE
SPEED 308km
STAGE 5

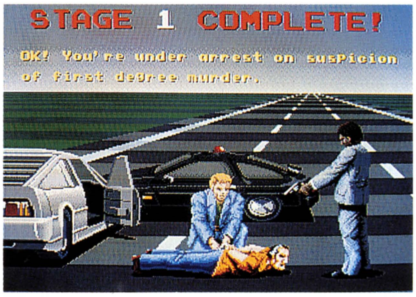
Play Hints:

- Avoid contact with vehicles other than the suspect cars. Contact with other cars or running off the course will result in the loss of crucial time.

- Bump the criminal's car from inside the curves. Bumping from outside will cause the player's car to spin out.

- When Nancy at Chase Headquarters announces that time is running out, the player has 10 seconds to overtake the criminal. Save your Turbo Charge and use it here.

- Crash the suspect car on the sides rather than the rear end as crashing from the side causes more damage.



STAGE 1 COMPLETE!

OK! You're under arrest on suspicion of first degree murder.

TAITO

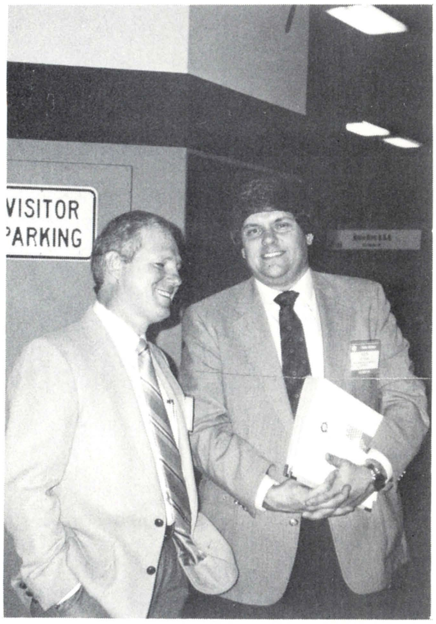
TAITO AMERICA CORPORATION
660 S. Wheeling Road
Wheeling, IL 60090
Telephone (312) 520-9280
Fax (312) 520-1309

Printed in the U.S.A.

Photos from Bob Rondeau

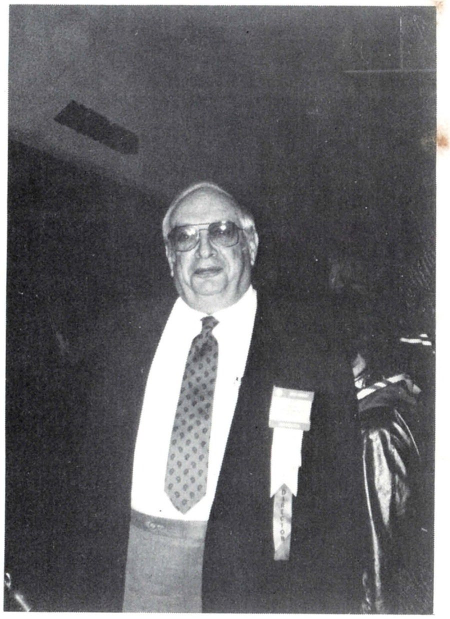
Bob Rondeau has been in the coin-op business for 40 years, 28 of them with Bally. He has recently been working with AAMA, AMOA, Williams, and Bally. He sent some photos with this note: ''Here are some pictures from AMOA that I think you will enjoy. That's what friends are for!''

The Bettelmans: Ira, Leah, Adrea, and Sandy, of C.A. Robinson, looking at *Truck Stop*.



Dave Marofske (l) of Grand Products with Ken Fedesna of Williams.

Capcom's Brian Duke and Bill Cravens meeting with Game Exchange's Rich Babich.



My friend Lou Singer.

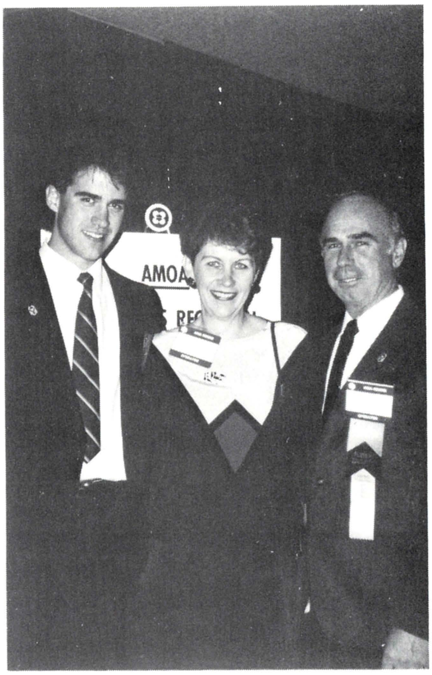
From left: Greg McKay of Bally, Hank Ross and Terry Sullivan of Grand Products, Bob Rondeau, and Brian Oshouski of Grand Products.

TICKET SALES
MESSAGE CENTER

Frank Gumma, John Neville, and Leo Finn of American Vending.

Bob Rondeau (l) with Debbie Austin and Ken Anderson of Leland.

Past AMOA presidents (l to r): Al Ptacek, Russ Mawdsley, and Garland Garrett.



New AMOA President Clyde Knupp with wife Diane and son.

Bev Rondeau and Debbie Stevens doing their thing at the Bally booth.

FRANK'S CRANKS

My AMOA '88 Show Picks

by Frank ''the Crank'' Seninsky

Twice a year right after the two major shows, Play Meter enjoys putting the pressure on me to pick the hits. This has become quite a task since I don't get to spend as much time on the floor as I have at past shows. However, I do have dozens of unbiased ''eyes and ears'' out there who do spend a lot of time on the floor and report back their findings.

So, once again, here are my show picks. Please note that this article was written the day after the show and some of the manufacturers may decide to release games as kits or dedicated or both. These decisions can have a major impact on whether the game becomes a hit or just another game.

Best Dedicated Videos

Before the show I had several games already on test that I was pretty sure would continue their staying power, including *4 Player Quarterback* by Leland and *Cyberball* by Atari. These games have earned extremely well for the past month and certainly still rank up there with anything that was shown. I am going to continue buying *4 Player QB's* since the old *Quarterback* is still my overall gameroom top earner and the *4-Player QB* is currently earning twice that of *Quarterback*. My number one and number two choices for gamerooms go to *4-Player Quarterback* and *Cyberball*.

JOHN ELWAY'S
TEAM QUARTERBACK
JOHN ELWAY'S
TEAM QUARTERBACK

Chase H.Q. from Taito is my choice as the best driving game at the show. I like *Power Drift*, and it is my choice as the second best driving game shown. But I don't feel it was a great leap forward for Sega. Their games have been great, but let's be realistic. Why would an operator sell his *Out Run*'s and *After Burner*'s and go for *Power Drift* unless it's for something really special?

Robo Cop by Data East drew a lot of praise because of the excellent graphics and realistic movie tie-in. It is on my list of top games at the show.

Narc by Williams has superb graphics, as does Capcom's *Ghosts & Ghouls*. Williams is to be commended for showing us what the video games of the near future will be like. However, I've heard that the price tag is high, which could seriously hurt the marketing of the game.

Double Dragon-The Revenge or *DD2* is an excellent game but just too similar to *Double Dragon* for me to go heavy with this one. However, I'm sure it will earn more than *DD* but maybe not as long.

Kits

There are several high earning dedicated games that could be blockbuster hits if they are offered as kits. Some of these were shown as dedicated but plans were not firm whether they would be kits or dedicated.

Ninja Gaiden from Tecmo was shown as a dedicated game, but I'm hoping that Tecmo makes a good business decision to offer this one as a kit. It just could prove to be the industry's number one kit. I will not buy many of these if they are sold as only dedicated.

Devastators from Konami has been earning extremely well for me for some months now, and I am extremely happy that it is now being offered as a kit. I will certainly buy many more of these as kits.

Cabal by Fabtek has been a top-earning game for the past few weeks. With the scarcity of superior kits, *Cabal* certainly is an excellent choice for the operator.

Capcom Bowling just keeps on going strong. I just ordered six more because I feel it is one of the best long-term game investments I can make. It has been earning steady for many months now with little sign of slippage. It's an excellent game for taverns (adults), as well as gamerooms for the younger players.

V'Ball by Taito as a two- or four-player game drew a lot of attention, even though the action is considered slow compared to what we've come to expect. I'm not certain about this one and

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will take a wait and see approach. I could certainly use a kit to upgrade my dying *Gauntlet*'s, so I'm praying along with all of you that this game does well.

Pinball

Taxi from Williams will help the company continue its successful roll. It's already earning very well. If you need a pin and can't get a *Pinbot* or *Cyclone*, rest easy and get a *Taxi*. Williams has introduced a plastic cashbox and improved its flipper assembly. They deserve their number one position.

Time Machine by Data East looks and plays well. I'll go on record as recommending it if you need variety, as we all do. My hat's off to Data East for giving us a quality product.

Truck Stop from Bally was a pleasant surprise. Many liked this game even more than my number two choice. Take a good look and make up your own mind. We can expect Bally to get better and better.

Bad Girls by Premier appeals to sophisticated players like the Europeans, who have always been attracted to Premier games. Premier is making a serious effort to give the American player what they want.

Bally
Truck Stop

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Novelty and Systems

Nintendo is offering *Play Choice-5 and -10* packs with excellent titles like *Operation Wolf*, *Quarterback*, and *Double Dragon*. Nintendo has given the operator a chance to cash in once again with a quick return on investment.

I will be buying some of ICE's *Turbo Drive*. This electro-mechanical slot car racing game looks great for arcades.

Hoop Shot Gold from Doyle & Associates has been re-engineered to attract the street operator. The game is only 375 lbs., with eight modular components, high-impact grid (no nets), adjustable height, and it's very competitively priced.

There are many more games and products that deserve mention. Let's not forget Rowe and Seeburg for their superior CD jukeboxes. For those of you that didn't make the AMOA show, be sure to visit your distributor open houses and take a good look at all these new products.

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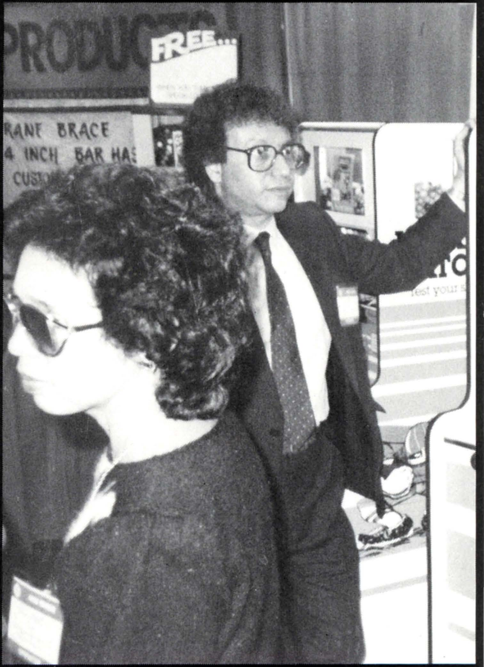
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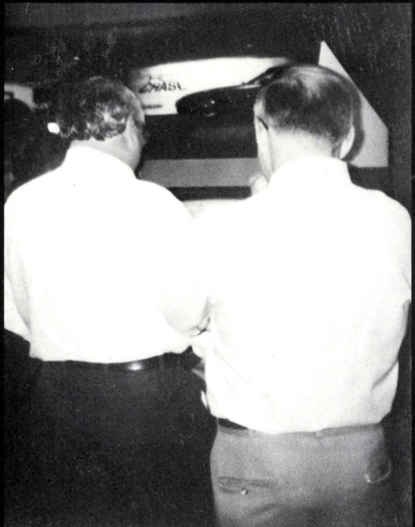
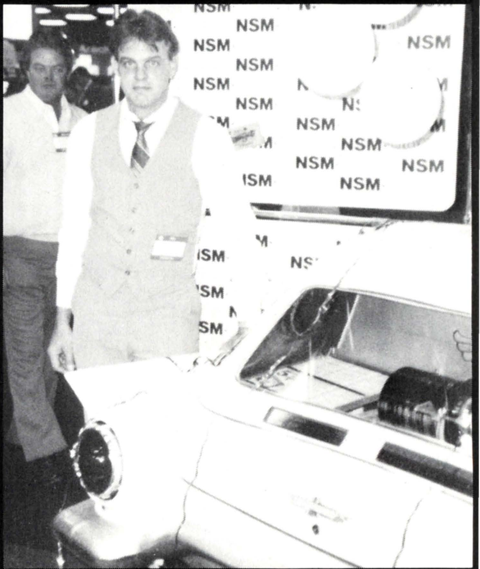
4 INCH BAR HAS

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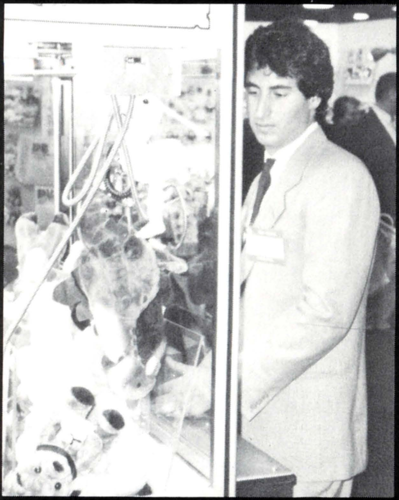

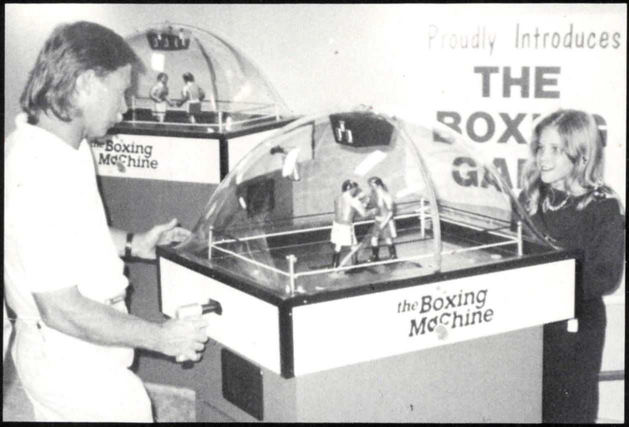
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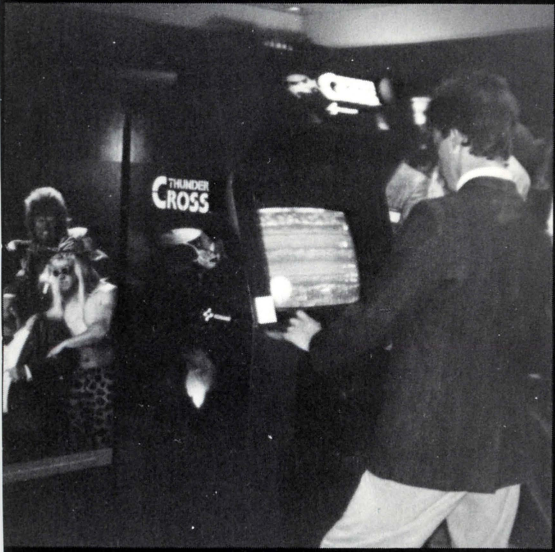
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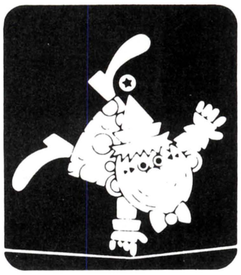


'Tis the season to maximize crane profits

Sleigh bells are already ringing in our heads as we conjure up thoughts of warm fires, good food, and gatherings of families and friends over the upcoming holidays. It's also time to remember to creatively stock cranes with appealing merchandise.

No matter how well "shopped" the public may be, there's no resisting a chance to get an extra little something from the crane to include with stocking stuffers, or use as a decorative touch on a special Christmas present under the tree.

P.M.I. Toys & Novelties offers an assortment of six-and-a-half-inch plush animals with its Christmas Hippo, Bear, and Elephant, sure to please holiday players. These come 12 dozen per carton. For more information on these items or other seasonal pieces, call P.M.I. (800) 562-5266.

Brady Novelty has one of the most in-demand items with its California Raisins that are playing musical instruments such as guitars and trumpets; there's also sports-minded raisins on skateboards or playing football.

These can be bought separately in a California Raisin assortment, or are available sprinkled throughout Brady's current pre-packs. These come six dozen per case, priced at $1.50 each including the plastic container. When three to five cases are purchased, the price per item drops to $1 each; for over six cases the price is 90 cents each. For more details, call Brady Novelty (800) 451-8697.

Impressment Plus has a most cuddly and popular animal assortment with its koala, panda, and raccoon available in two sizes. The 10.5 inch size is priced at $2.25 each or $27 per dozen and comes four dozen to a case. The 16 inch size is priced at $4.75 each or $57 per dozen and comes two dozen to a case. For more information, call Impressment Plus (800) 441-5769.

Prizes! has just received the Popeye Collection that includes the spinach-chomping wonder, Popeye himself; as well as Olive Oyl, Swee'Pea and Wimpy. These are the original manufacturer's collection, authentic in every detail. For more information, call Prizes! (800) 992-2388.

All of these selections are sure to add interest to your cranes. Many operators advocate putting small, inexpensive plush on top and some of the most desired items in the middle, encouraging players to work down to the really popular or newest items. Just a few of these new pieces can mean the difference between a crane that's just a "walk by" or being a definite "stop and play."

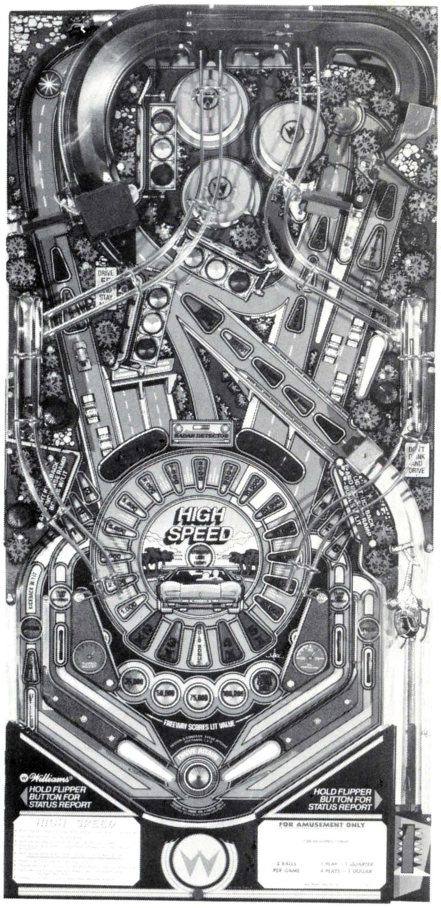
Remember that we are nearing the end of the pro and collegiate football season, so consider sports memorabilia for the top teams in your area (bowl games in particular). Have the school or team name printed on plastic cups or T-shirts, for instance. Order T-shirts all size large for the most satisfaction from players; this suits most adults, and kids prefer them big anyway. ☐

Three generations of pinball

by Todd Erickson

Pinball has gone through many changes since the first game. Flippers were added many years ago, and then, in 1975, Bally had the first production run of electronic games. From there the games just kept getting better.

Self-percentaging, first used on the *High Speed* pinball, brought on another generation of games. This feature made it more profitable to operate pinball games for the operator. *High Speed* also had switch elimination: if a switch didn't work, it told the operator of the problem in the display.


High Speed

HIGH SPEED
Williams
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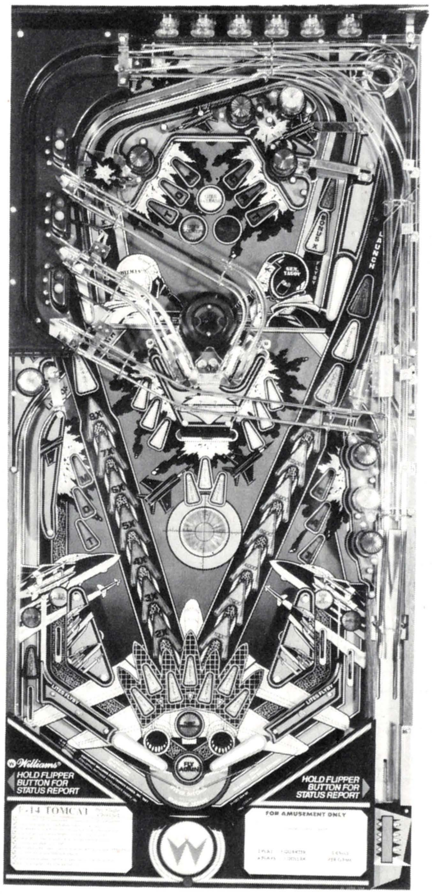
F-14 Tomcat

Williams
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F-14 TOMCAT
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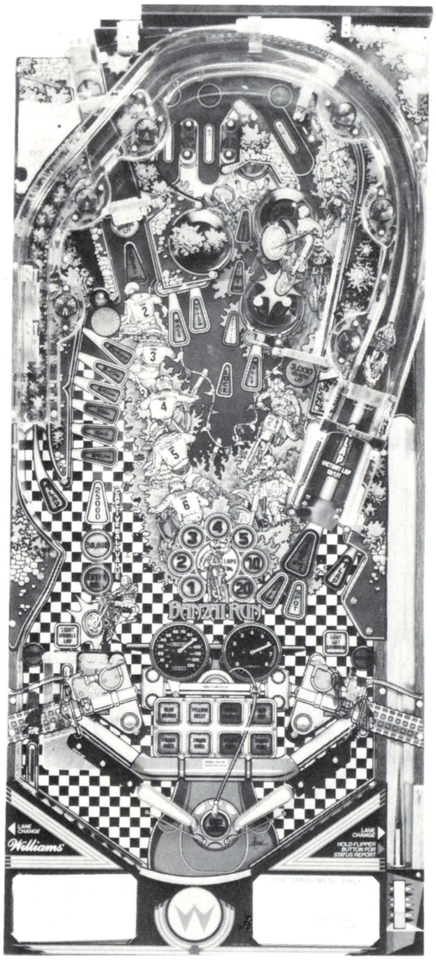
The next generation of games came with the parallel flipper coil on *F-14 Tomcat*. In over one-and-a-half years, I have yet to burn up a parallel flipper coil. Not bad, considering where we used to be with series coils.

WMS released the next generation of games a few months ago. They have software that corrects mechanical defects, so that the most serious defect, balls hanging up, can be easily corrected. This may sound impossible, but it is really quite easy.

Banzai Run has an extra ball in it. It can run with the correct number or one extra; with one extra ball, the game runs normally. If one ball gets lost on the playfield, the game will cycle all outholes several times trying to find the ball. If it can't find the ball, it ejects another one and plays normally. And if the lost ball is released, the game may be temporarily confused.

This feature will save the operator a $30 service call. Also, if the game has a short in the switch matrix, it will tell the operator the color of the wire that is shorted. The drive that takes the ball up on *Banzai Run* knows how long it takes. It will reverse if the upper limit switch hasn't been made in the right amount of time. ☐


Banzai Run

BANZAI RUN
Williams
LANE CHANGE
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Year-end tax planning reaps springtime harvest

by Irving L. Blackman

The best way to beat the tax collector is to continually monitor your tax situation according to an organized tax plan. Start early in the year and update the plan after mid-year. Then you are ready to harvest your savings at the most important update—the final year-end tax planning session. This checklist article will help you reap your harvest.

But first, let's talk about objectives. Your overall objective is to jockey both income and expenses into the year, either 1988 or 1989, that will produce the lowest overall tax for both years. However, sometimes your strategy will be to spread the tax impact into years after 1989. Was 1986 a loss year? If so, your best bet may be to increase the loss as much as possible. Why? Because your loss can be carried back to 1985, when tax rates were higher, allowing you to recover a cash refund for past taxes paid.

This article emphasizes the year-end aspects of tax planning, but the material should also be used as the basis for your planning after year-end.

Balance sheet items

A. Cash

1. Invest in tax-free municipals.
2. Invest in dividend-paying stock of domestic corporations (70 percent tax-free). A caution, however: you cannot borrow to carry such stocks.
3. Does an excess amount of cash indicate an accumulated earnings problem?

B. Accounts Receivable

1. Write off all bad accounts.
2. Make sure below-market loans to shareholders will not exceed $10,000, resulting in non-deductible imputed dividends.

C. Inventory

1. Are overhead items being properly included or excluded according to the new capitalization rule?
2. Are inventory levels and locations designed to minimize state and local property taxes?
3. Sell obsolete, old, or damaged merchandise to capture inventory losses as a current deduction.
4. If not on LIFO, write down damaged, shopworn, odd-lot and obsolete goods to salable values, less direct costs of disposition. The value assigned must be established by an actual offer for sale within 30 days of the valuation date. If they cannot be sold, junk them.
5. Consider switching to the LIFO method. If using LIFO, determine inventory levels needed at year-end to maximize benefits.

> *"The best way to beat the tax collector is to continually monitor your tax situation according to an organized tax plan."*

D. Investments

1. Realize gains to offset expiring operating or capital loss carryforwards.
2. Realize corporate capital losses to carryback against gains of prior years.
3. Consider filing consolidated returns.

E. Property, Plant, and Equipment Accounts

1. Instead of selling equipment, avoid gain by trading it in.
2. Initiate needed repairs.
3. If equipment is obsolete, sell it or abandon it so you can deduct the remaining book value.
4. Place property in service before year-end to maximize depreciation; however, don't blow use of mid-year convention by putting 40 percent of property in service during the last three months of the year.
5. Deduct the cost of tires and tubes immediately, whether the vehicles were purchased new or used (Rev. Rul. 59-249, 73-357).
6. Determine and properly report the *personal use* of company cars and other such facilities.
7. Consider the impact of depreciation and investment credit recapture on dispositions.
8. Expense up to $10,000 of new personal property instead of taking depreciation over a period of years.

Liabilities

1. Debt obligation; formalize all debt obligations, particularly to stockholders/officers. Issue notes at a rate required to avoid imputed interest, and pay the interest when due.
2. Structure payments received in advance to be eliminated from current income; a) service contracts and b) security deposits.
3. Fix vacation pay liability sufficiently to warrant accrual.
4. Fix officers' and directors' bonuses by resolution before year-end.

(Note: Compensation, rents, and interest due to more than 50 percent shareholders must be paid in cash to receive current year deduction.)

5. With disputed amounts, to nail down current deduction a) settle, possibly by deferring payments; b) prepay, subject to future settlement; and c) transfer the full amount to trust (or escrow) to be used to satisfy a pending lawsuit. To the extent that the trust funds are not used to satisfy a claim, the return of such funds is taxable in the year received.

6. Accrue payroll taxes (FICA and FUTA) on wages earned and accrued in the current year but paid the following year.

> *"Your overall objective is to jockey both income and expenses into the year, either 1988 or 1989, that will produce the lowest overall tax for both years."*

G. Capital Stock

1. Consider an "S corporation" election or termination based on estimates of anticipated corporate earnings and taxpayer's personal tax bracket. Beware of built-in gains.

2. Consider issuing a tax-free preferred stock dividend. See H-2 below for the advantage.

3. Consider a stock option or bonus plan, either qualified or non-qualified.

4. If new stock financing is contemplated, make it Section 1244 stock.

5. Consider income and estate tax implications of a recapitalization, redemption, gifts, or other transfer of ownership techniques.

H. Earnings and Profits

1. Pay tax-free dividends if there are no current or accumulated earnings.

2. Pay dividends. Although this is a no-no, it could help an accumulated earnings problem. Also, if preferred stock is held by low-bracket family members (except for your children under 14 years old), dividends may help more than hurt.

3. Time dividends for the best tax advantages of the stockholders—usually declare in the current year and pay in the next one.

4. Document your reasons for accumulating earnings in excess of $250,000 ($150,000 if a professional corporation) and recite in corporate minutes. Retain all backup documentation.

(Note: Look at every other asset and liability on the balance sheet to determine if anything can be done tax-wise).

If business has a cash shortage

1. If the corporation overpaid estimated income tax, file a quickie refund claim using Form 4466 within two-and-a-half months of year-end.

2. If the business has a qualified profit-sharing plan, get an automatic six-month extension. Payments can still be deducted for the current year, even though the actual payment is not made until eight-and-a-half months after the end of the fiscal year.

3. Charitable contributions; fix liability by corporate minutes before year-end. It gets the current deduction, but you have two-and-a-half months after year-end to make payment.

4. Make a charitable contribution in property. You can deduct up to twice the cost of inventory.

Cash-basis taxpayer

1. Same as #2 above for a qualified plan.

2. If you desire to reduce income, a) pay bills before year-end, b) defer billing, or c) prepay expenses and non-inventory items.

3. If you desire to increase income, a) do the reverse of items in item #2 above, and b) sell future services at a discount (to encourage same) and receive payment in the current year.

Increasing/decreasing current year's deduction (accrual basis)

A. Increasing deductions

1. Bonuses/compensation; a) consider for officers and stockholder/employees; watch reasonableness, because one must pay more than 50 percent stockholder by year-end; b) consider bonuses to the key

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people and other employees; and c) can non-refundable commission be prepaid?

2. Qualified pension or profit-sharing plan; a) consider a large contribution under a discretionary plan or increase benefits under a defined benefit plan; b) install a new plan; c) fund past-service liability; and d) fund for the maximum deductible amount allowed, rather than the minimum amount required.

3. Incur expenses that can be paid or accrued before the end of the year. For example, consider all of the following: a) utilize maximum allowable (10 percent of taxable income) charitable deduction; b) incur advertising, sales promotion and producing and mailing costs of catalogues this year so benefits will be received next year; c) order and obtain all types of non-inventory supplies such as printed forms, sales brochures, and so on; d) accelerate repairs and/or abandonments.

4. Travel and entertainment; a) review all documentation for any facilities (such as yacht, plane or club membership) to make sure business use exceeds 50 percent; b) increase business use for the balance of the year.

5. Attend educational seminars. The costs of tuition, books, supplies, transportation, lodging, and meals are deductible (80 percent for the latter if the course is out of town) as long as education maintains or improves skills used in your business.

6. Review each item on the profit and loss statement.

B. Decreasing deduction

1. In general, do the reverse of "A" above.

2. Where any expenditures for this year will provide greater benefit in the next year: a) the key is to avoid the expenditure, but when this is not possible...b) document the benefits for future years and charge to prepaid accounts.

Decreasing/increasing current year's income (accrual basis)

A. Decreasing income

1. Delay shipping to next year.

2. Ship, but ship F.O.B. point of destination, so the title does not pass until after year-end.

3. Make sales on consignments or approval, sometimes called "guaranteed sale." Outright sale with right of return yields instant income, not a deferral.

4. Sell and lease back Section 1231 property at a loss.

5. Instead of selling property, give up possession in the current year but give the buyer either a) the option to buy in the next year, or b) lease with an option to buy.

6. Use escrow that closes next year.

7. Where services, as opposed to inventory, are sources of income, change the billing procedure to defer billing into the next month or quarter. This will have to be a permanent change.

8. Structure advance payments received to be conditional, or in the form of a loan financing arrangement, rather than as a prepayment.

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B. Increasing income

1. Occasionally the worm turns, and it is advisable to accelerate income for reasons such as: a) you expect to be in a higher income tax bracket next year; b) a net operating loss is about to expire—don't lose it!; or c) other carryover benefits will be lost if not currently used.

2. The following techniques should be considered: a) in general, the reverse of "A" above; b) encourage customer purchases in the current year by deferring payments, giving cash discounts next year, giving an advertising allowance (which will be paid and deducted next year), and using your imagination to promote current sales; c) sell installment receivables; and d) sell and lease back appreciated Section 1231 property, Section 1245 property (personal), or Section 1250 property (real estate). Take back notes, but do not elect the installment method.

(Note: the tax law sweeps depreciation recapture into income in year of sale even if the installment method is elected.)

Other year-end musts and considerations

A. Minute Book

Review and update the corporate minutes, at least annually. This is smart protection in the event of an IRS audit. Ideally, update at the beginning of each year and start by determining executive salaries for the year to come. Also, document bank loans, retirement plans, compensation plans, and other unusual plans. An attorney should guide you. The IRS may say that the corporate minutes are "self-serving," but let's face it, *they are the only minutes that exist.*

B. Business Information Returns (Form 1099)

Make sure you file every information return required by the law correctly and on time (most are due by July 31). Heavy penalties, up to $10,000, can be assessed for non-filing.

C. Alternative Minimum Tax(AMT)

Review possible liability for AMT every quarter. Once liability or possible liability rears its ugly head, monitor monthly and take all possible steps to minimize or eliminate the liability.

D. Liquidation of Certain Corporations

Liquidation of small (under $5 million in value), closely-held corporations avoids double tax until Jan. 1, 1989.

E. Leasing

Put building and equipment acquired in separate partnership when purchased and lease them to the corporation.

Year-end tax planning is always a win-win situation. Although this article will get you started, it does not attempt to cover every situation, exception, or trap. Simply put, it is not a do-it-yourself kit. Get professional help. □

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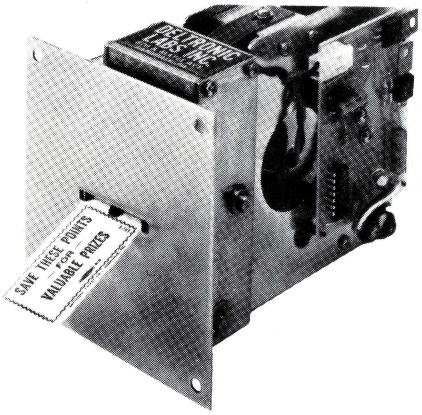

DELTRONIC LABS DL-1275 Ticket Dispenser is now available in kits—for quick and easy installation on existing video, pinball and novelty games.

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Time Machine

Data East Pinball introduces *Time Machine*, a new pinball that takes players back to a 50s diner, complete with rock-n-roll jukebox and the clicking and chime sounds of an old time pinball game.

Special features include a ramp shot that transports players through time to the 60s and 70s. During the 50s, play three-ball multiball for great pinball action.

Rubber sizes are screened to the top of the playfield. Also screened are the bottom of the playfield indicating the location of all components, wire colors, and direction of the diodes.

All computer-controlled lamps are mounted to printed circuit boards that utilize twist-in sockets for ease of service. In addition, the backbox printed circuit boards have been repositioned for easier access.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Data East Pinball, Inc., 1990 Janice Ave., Melrose Park, IL 60160; (312) 345-7700.

TIME MACHINE
DE PINBALL

Strike Zones

Top Dawg

Williams Electronics Games introduces its latest shuffle alley, *Top Dawg*, that has advanced diagnostic procedures, comprehensive bookkeeping functions, and easily identifiable connectors as well as PC boards for simple servicing and troubleshooting.

In addition to the proven play of Regulation, Flash, and Strike 90, Top Dawg features Total Strikes, a new shuffle option where scoring is like regulation bowling with one difference. Every time players make a strike, it's recorded on the backglass and at the end of the game a bonus of 300 points is rewarded for each strike.

In Tic Tac II the game randomly spots three squares on a backglass grid. Strikes earn players 300 points each and lights a square while each spare earns 100 points. To strike it rich, players must light three squares in a row (vertically, horizontally, or diagonally) to score an extra 500 point bonus.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Williams Electrtonics Games, Inc., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240.

Bad Girls

Premier Technology debuts a new Gottlieb pinball, *Bad Girls*, that brings the game of pool into the 21st century with innovative features.

Bad Girls incorporates a new lightbox design that makes displays easily seen and a newly designed speaker panel with positive locking bar that highlights a larger and improved photographic backglass. On that backglass several "bad girls" are seen racking up points on a shining billiard table, inviting players to do the same on the playfield.

Players can line up shots while rockin' to the rhythm of the music generated by the Yamaha sound board. New mirrored plastics and cabinet sides are sure to attract players to the game. Height measurement with the larger photographic backglass is 77 inches.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Premier Technology, 759 Industrial Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106; (312) 350-0400.

Gottlieb
BAD GIRLS
BAD GIRLS

P*47

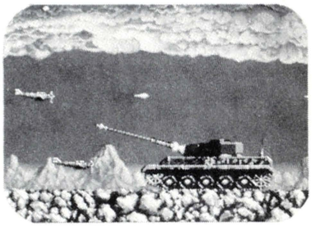
Jaleco U.S.A. introduces a new horizontal conversion kit, *P*47*, that involves players in air-to-air, air-to-ground, and air-to-sea combat.

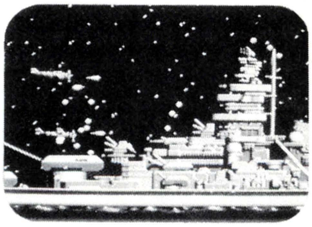
*P*47* uses a two-player interactive format. The second player can join in at any time during the game. A game continue feature allows players to extend their time of play by adding more coins.

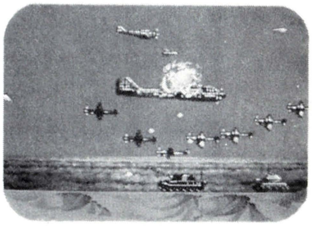
An automatic skill adjustment feature recognizes the player's skill level automatically, making the game easy for the novice and yet challenging for the expert player.

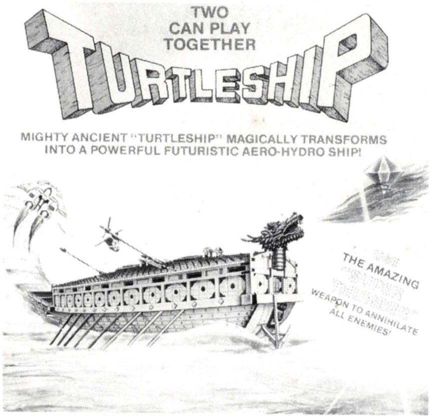
The game offers a variety of terrains in the air-to-ground battles including armored tanks. Destroyers appear in the air-to-sea battles and enemy aircraft pass ominously close in the air-to-air scenes.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Jaleco U.S.A., Inc., 5617 West Howard St., Niles, IL 60648; (312) 647-7077.








TWO
CAN PLAY
TOGETHER
TURTLESHIP
MIGHTY ANCIENT "TURTLESHIP" MAGICALLY TRANSFORMS
INTO A POWERFUL FUTURISTIC AERO-HYDRO SHIP!
THE AMAZING
WEAPON TO ANNIHILATE
ALL ENEMIES!

Turtleship

Sharp Image Electronics introduces a two-player fantasy adventure with *Turtleship*, a game that offers scenes scrolling both vertically and horizontally.

In *Turtleship* players travel the universe in search of the final enemy that commands the forces of evil. The ancient Turtleship, reminiscent of a Viking ship, magically transforms into a futuristic aero-hydro ship.

Controls for each player include an eight-way joystick and buttons for single shot, missile, and super thunder. Options include slow motion, a gain of 3,000 points, hard head missiles, three-way shooting, bonus ship, missile, and super thunder. The game is licensed from Philko.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Sharp Image Electronics, Inc., 8000 Wheatland Ave, Unit C, Sun Valley, CA 91352; (800) 448-8100 or (818) 767-8855.

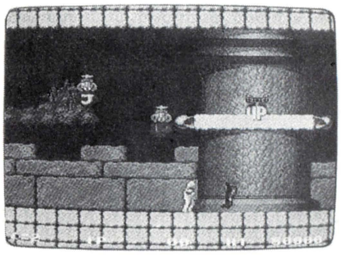
Atomic Runner Chelnov, Cobra Command

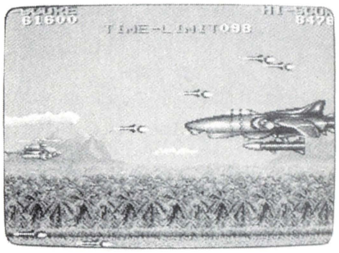
Data East provides variety in two one-player horizontal kits, *Atomic Runner Chelnov* and *Cobra Command*, both designed to grip players in heroic adventures.

Coming on the heels of successful spy thriller novels, *Atomic Runner Chelnov* has a science fiction post-nuclear war theme. The hero is charged with a mission of defusing an atomic bomb and must battle enemies in his way as he races against time. A half-destroyed Statue of Liberty is the scene for the last confrontation. The hero can move left and right; the background moves in the opposite direction.

Cobra Command features a 25-inch monitor and horizontally scrolling helicopter battles. Players travel through five different scenes that build to a meeting with the enemy at the end of each one. Three levels of difficulty are encountered, and settings include caverns, deserts, and city night scenes, among others. Helicopters fly through a lightning storm in one particularly effective scene.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Data East USA, Inc., 470 Needles Drive, San Jose, CA 95112; (408) 286-7080.





Team Quarterback

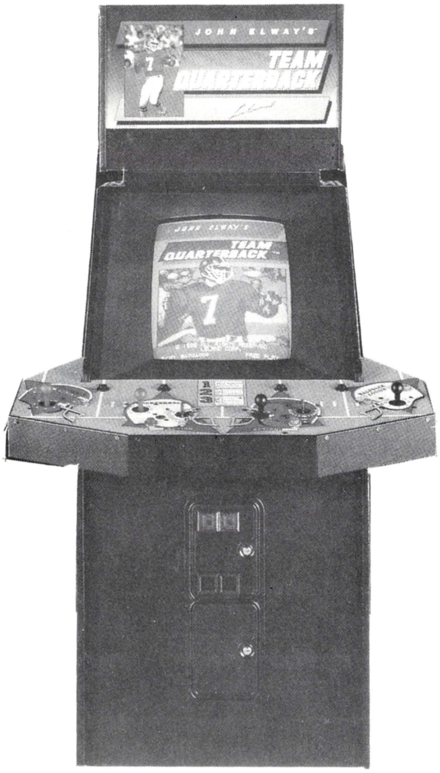
The Leland Corp. follows the success of *Quarterback* with a new generation four-player gridiron game, *Team Quarterback*, that features an oversized marquee with a picture of famous real-life quarterback John Elway.

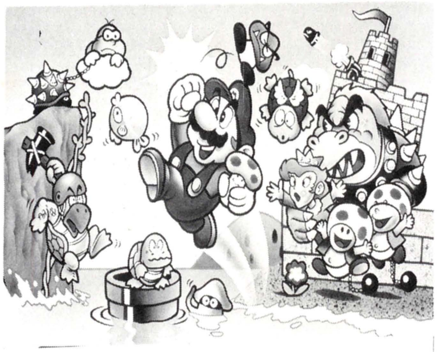
Features include a multi-player PC board and new software that makes the game run more quietly and require less power, thanks to the in-house research and development team.

Six offensive and six defensive plays have been added to the game. In ''play select,'' players can pitch the ball to teammates or go for a two-point conversion. The halfback can select extra speed or strength to go along with the quarterback's selections.

Each player has his own time clock and gets a better view of the field this time around. Sound effects and music have been improved as well.

For more information, or distributor referral, write The Leland Corp., 1841 Friendship Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020; (619) 562-7000.





Skate Kid Bros.

Two-Bit Score Amusements has given Mario and Luigi, those well-known characters from *Super Mario Bros.*, an expanded future of play with the addition of a graphics enhancement software update.

This update fits either the *VS.* or *Play Choice 10* format. The kit installs quickly and includes a new header and complete instructions.

Among the new players introduced with the software are a Ninja that throws stars, a quarterback throwing deadly footballs, and many new hidden items. Mario and Luigi will have to move swiftly and strategically to avoid meeting up with these new adversaries.

For more information, write Two-Bit Score, 11600 Manchaca Road, Suite 305, Austin, TX 78748; (512) 282-9369.

Wedges/Ledges II

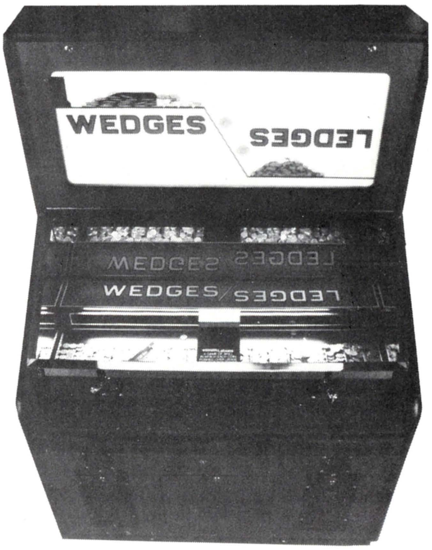
Wedges/Ledges of California introduces a two-player skill game, *Wedges/Ledges II*, that fills a product space between the company's single player and four-player units.

The new two-player unit has the patented ''no tilt'' inner table unit, music playing during ticket dispensing, operator-adjustable number of tickets dispensed, and quarter chutes. The company will customize the coin chutes to accept a particular token, making it even more appealing. All Wedges/Ledges games are made in the United States.

Wedges/Ledges II is perfect for banks of two games or more and has a high profile, bright lights, and a deep red cabinet, a trademark look of Wedges/Ledges.

Dimensions of the new game are 47 inches wide, 33 inches deep, and 72 inches wide.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Wedges/Ledges of California, Inc., 123 International Boardwalk, Redondo Beach, CA 90277; (213) 374-9982.

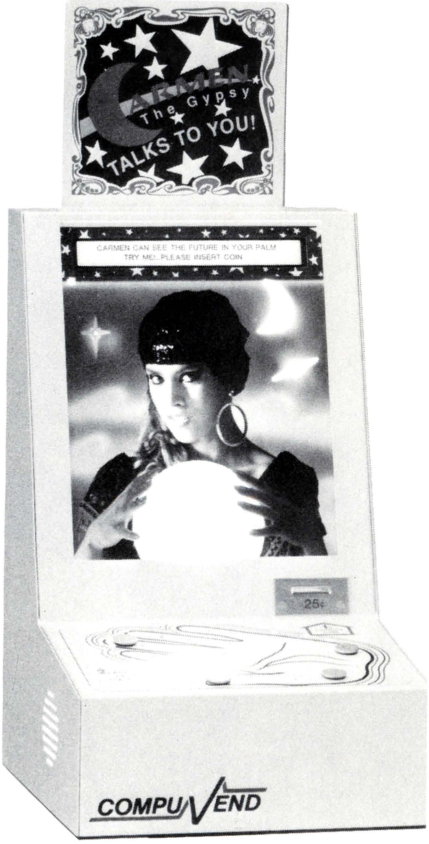


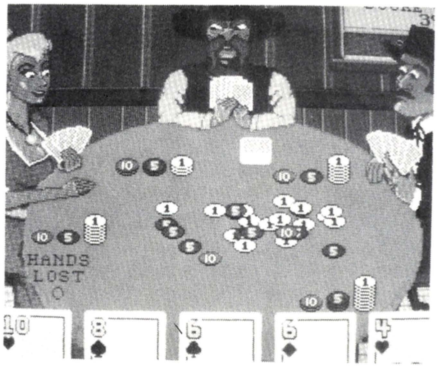
Carmen the Talking Gyypsy

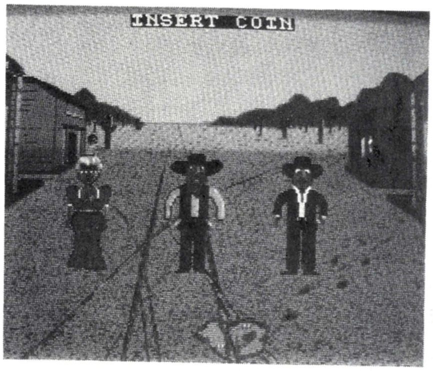
Mayoni Enterprises has upgraded its countertop, *Carmen the Talking Gypsy*, with a microchip synthesized voice and a high-visibility, four-color backlit front panel that helps attract impulse customers.

Mayoni has designed long-term, trouble-free performance into this latest addition to its New Generation line of vending products. *Carmen* comes with a one-year guarantee, is competitively priced, and has an exclusive new design. *Carmen* reads the player's palm and predicts his/her future.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Mayoni Enterprises, 10340 Glenoaks Blvd., Pacoima, CA 91331; (800) 345-1183 or (818) 899-2488.


CARMEN
The Gypsy
TALKS TO YOU!
CARMEN CAN SEE THE FUTURE IN YOUR PALM
TRY ME! PLEASE INSERT COIN
25¢
COMPU/VEND





Showdown

Exidy introduces a unique animated video poker, *Showdown*, in which the player takes the fourth hand in an Old West draw poker game.

All the features of poker are included: ante, bet, fold, draw, bet again, check, raise, and more. The three players pictured on the video screen are Dolly, Rawhide, and Doc. The characters wink, flirt, smirk, and laugh during game play.

The game is programmed from rules out of the book of ''Hoyle'' with strategy on what to hold, when to fold, and when to bluff. The game features operator selectable levels of difficulty; the better the player, the longer the play.

Showdown is the first of a series of new generation games for Exidy. It can convert any former Exidy gun game with a simple board exchange (the new kit includes a pistol). Or it can be purchased as a complete new game and cabinet. The universal kit includes six push buttons or joystick, no board exchange required.

For more information, write Exidy, 5122 Calle del Sol, Santa Clara, CA 95054; (408) 496-6466.

Sharp Shooter

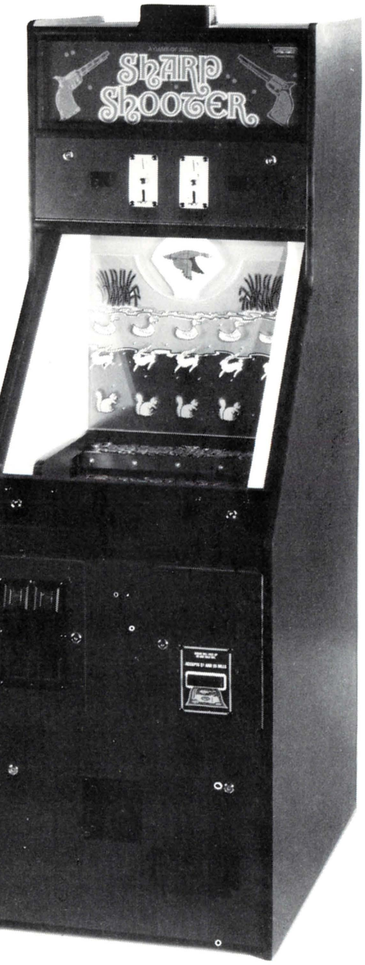
Gamemasters has developed *Sharp Shooter*, a one-player pusher game designed to be operated in a variety of locations.

Sharp Shooter allows a player to convert quarters or dollars to tokens that are played in the game. Bonus target awards can be achieved with skillful play. When the coins fall off the table they are counted and displayed on an LED readout. The player chooses the token button to receive tokens and keeps playing or the ticket button to issue tickets for merchandise redemption.

Features include token or quarter usage, ticket dispenser, skill aim stop/skill ledge stop, security system with mounting brackets, and optional dollar bill acceptor.

Dimensions are 36 inches deep, 25.5 inches wide, and 76 inches high.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Gamemasters, 555 Oakbrook Pkwy., Suite 240, Norcross, GA 30093; (404) 662-5666.



Narc

Williams electronics re-enters the video game market with the dedicated video, *Narc*, that's equipped with Williams' new custom-patented, in-house hardware and software system.

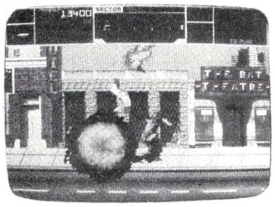
In *Narc* an elite team of Max Force and Hit Man are on a mission to destroy the K.R.A.K. criminal syndicate and protect the innocent. Junkies, punks, thieves, psychos, and murderers must all face the Elite team's special brand of justice.

Armed with machine guns and rocket bombs and the ability to cruise through city streets in a high-powered sports car, or fly overhead in a specially equipped helicopter, the elite team must bust or kill the lowlife that rules the underworld.

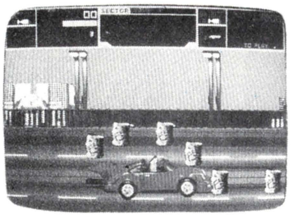
Action takes place in ghetto streets, downtown, inside abandoned warehouses, and across bridges to the ultimate showdown at corporate crime headquarters against the master villain, Mr. Big.

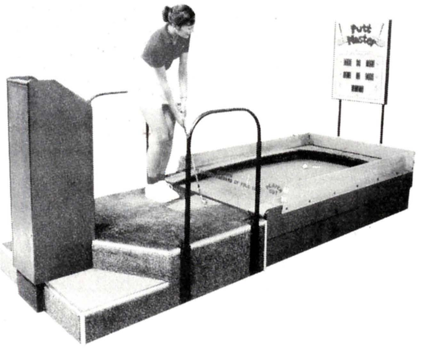
The game's backglass reminds players "Say NO to drugs!" The game's new cabinetry with 19-inch screen and larger control panel offers two-person cooperative play.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Williams Electronics, 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, Il 60618; (312) 2657-3747.



Williams
NARC
SAY NO TO DRUGS!





Putt Master

Troy M Enterprises takes mini golf to the arcades with *Putt Master*, a coin-operated version featuring nine holes of live action.

Putt Master offers a single player round with a three-minute time limit. Other options are Match Play, or Tournament Round, for one to four players. The Skins Game, a true challenge, is for two to three players and offers bonus points for holes won.

Putt Master features changing cup placement and green layout with each hole played. Players never encounter the same hole twice.

The game appeals to all family members and the skilled as well as unskilled player.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Troy M Enterprises, 776 Reynoldsburg, New Albany Road, Blacklick, OH 43004; (614) 863-1795.

Truck Stop

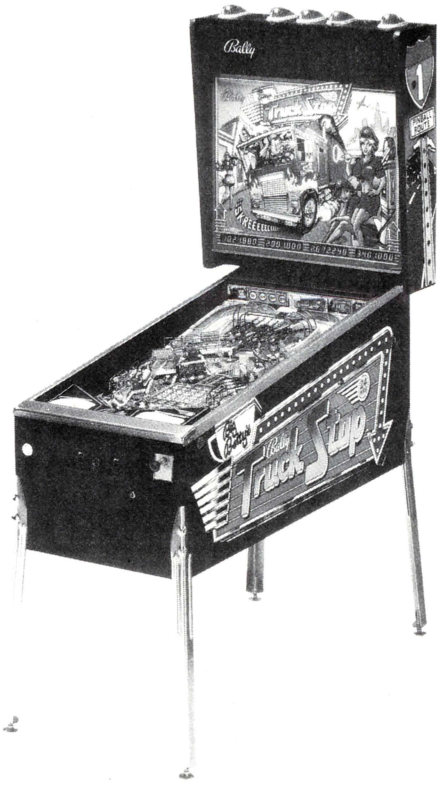
There's no missing Bally's newest pinball, *Truck Stop*, that has a progressive jackpot feature that builds to a potential of six million points.

In *Truck Stop* players are taken on an interstate playfield of curves and swerves for a cross-country multiball challenge. The high speed, two-ball action delivers entertainment and excitement.

New eye-catching graphics and attention-getting sound effects complete the package. The girls at Big Betty's truck stop are nothing short of voluptuous and the harried trucker on the backglass can't keep his eyes off of them.

The game has state-of-the-art diagnostics for simplified troubleshooting and sophisticated self-percentaging capabilities that allows for the monitoring and automatic adjusting of all key playfield scoring features.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Bally Midway Mfg. Co., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240.



Org

Amusement, Inc. introduces *Org*, a robotic merchandiser that talks to patrons. *Org* also lights up, plays music, and blinks.

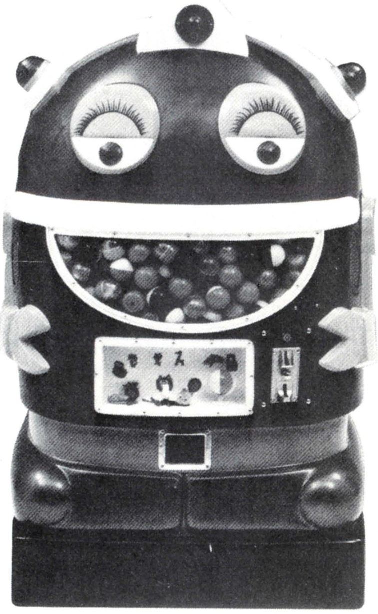
Org is a bulk vender that comes in the primary colors of blue, red, and yellow, with touches of white. His capacity is 1200 V-2 capsules or special Org-shaped plastic capsules. The vender needs no assembly and is easy to maintain.

Org's voice chip is easily programmable or customized to promote a store location or to stress value. A permanent, programmed chip performs four different outer space melodies, rotating each time.

Org has an adjustable coin mech that allows operators to vary the price of a prize from 25 cents up to $1. There is a sold-out indicator, plus a solenoid component that prevents slugs and foreign coins from being inserted. It has a quick access, drop-down drawer for filling inventory and a separate locked cashbox entry. There's also an optional coin counter for tamper-proof accounting.

Dimensions are 50.4 inches tall, 29.5 inches wide, and 21.6 inches deep. The unit is mounted on rollers for easy moving and operates on standard 100/120 volt, 60 cycle current.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Amusement, Inc., 13341 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA 91423; (818) 501-8995.



Riviera

Coin Concepts debuts the *Riviera* coin pusher by Crompton. This six-player pusher has a super-wide playfield, new bonus stacker feature, or special token dispense model.

Optional equipment includes six Mars multimech changers and a top sign or prize display unit.

The unit is bright red, yellow, and blue, with a colorful overhead display. It is available in two-player version; also three, four, and six-player sizes. The appealing sound effects are synthesized.

Coin Concepts also offers the *New York, New York* model penny pusher by Crompton, as well as the *Carousel Champ* six-player crane and *Classic Champ* crane in two-player and three-player models.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Coin Concepts, Inc., 12 Edgeboro Road, Unit 4, East Brunswick, NJ 08816; (800) 462-COIN or (201) 390-9009.

Vegas Vendor

Coastal Amusement Distributors will be the exclusive U.S. distributor for the new *Vegas Vendor* by Associated Coin Ltd. of Great Britain, a company that specializes in novelty vending equipment.

Already introduced in Europe, the *Vegas Vendor* is a game/vending unit that is particularly suitable for the in-between age child and promotions within a location. The object is to stop the lights on the colored wheel at certain points to win a capsule displayed in the lower prize section. The capsule can contain a small prize or a coupon good in the location. The game lends itself to trading up for larger prizes (displayed at the top of the game).

The cabinet is constructed of a man-made, hi-density fiber with stainless steel front and brushed aluminum trim. It measures two-feet deep by two-feet wide by five-feet two inches tall. It is also available as a different game, *Hunt the Humpty*. Four new games for the same unit will be coming in 1989.

The game is designed to raise the level of novelty vending and provide interchangeable games for a single base unit.

For more information, write Coastal Amusement Distributors, 601 Prospect St., Lakewood, NJ 08701; (201) 370-3030.

STAR PRIZE CAPSULES
VEGAS VENDOR

Ghouls 'N Ghosts

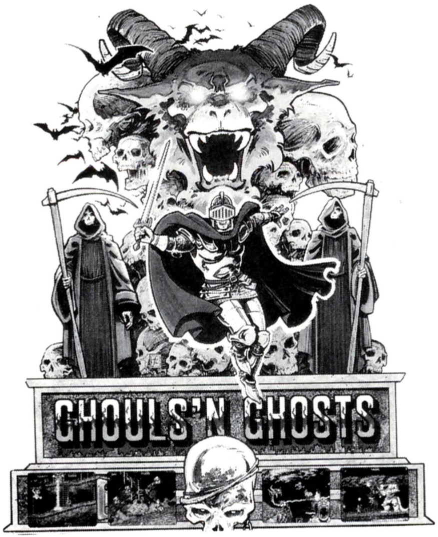
Capcom debuts a scary, spooky adventure video with *Ghouls 'N Ghosts*, a dedicated one-or two-player game.

This is Capcom's second game on the CPS System (following *Forgotten Worlds*) that utilizes Capcom's super-chip. The game features a new computer-aided difficulty adjustment that automatically adjusts to each player's skill level.

Graphics are particularly good as the caped and armored hero battles the Evil Ones. Players press the joystick to climb up ladders, press down to climb down or crouch. To fire up or down, players press the fire button while pressing the joystick up or down.

Weapons include an axe, disc, sword, spear, napalm, sorcery, and a knife. To gain the desired magic power, players must find the magic armor in the magic box.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Capcom USA, 1283-C Mountain View/Alviso Road, Sunnyvale, CA 94089; (408) 745-7081.



pitter pattern
SCORING
RED
GREEN
BLANK

Genie Games, Super Pit Boss

Merit Industries introduces the countertop *Genie Games* and the latest edition of its *Pit Boss* series, *Super Pit Boss*.

Genie Games feature a swivel base cabinet and a line of interchangeable quick kits with PC boards, pre-assembled control panels, and marquees easily installed on location. Games include *Bullseye*, a two-games-in-one unit with 301 Exacta and Hi-Score; *Scramble*, a fast-paced word game; and *Pitter Pattern*, a memory testing game. All are compact, UPS shippable, and inexpensive.

Super Pit Boss offers 11-games-in-one. New game additions include Bonus Black Jack and Roll Them Bones, two casino-like games with betting features that bring the feel of Las Vegas action to the player. It also offers new versions of other *Pit Boss* games including Sex Trivia and four extended varieties of Super Trivia, Super 7-Stud, and Joker Poker; plus Super Phraze Craze and Off To The Races.

Super Pit Boss fits anywhere with its easy-access swivel base. It comes as a compact nine-inch countertop or a 13-inch model. Kits are also available to easily replace *Pit Boss* games already in the field.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Merit Industries, P.O. Box 5004, Bensalem, PA 19020; (800) 523-2760 or (215) 639-4700.

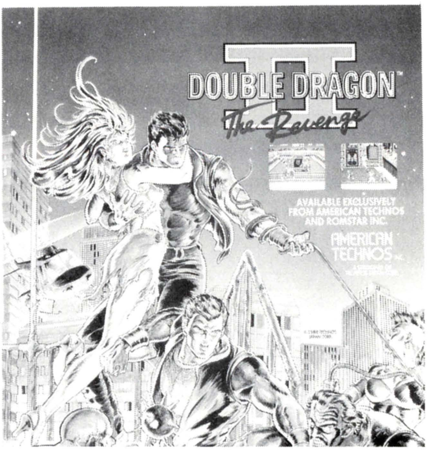
Double Dragon II-The Revenge

American Technos and Romstar have teamed to bring out the sequel to the hit video, *Double Dragon*, with *Double Dragon II — The Revenge*.

Available as dedicated, *Double Dragon II-The Revenge* features an eight-way joystick control, left attack button to kick or hit to the left, and right attack button to kick or hit to the right. Players use a jump button to avoid obstacles.

Various combinations of the left attack, right attack, and jump buttons reveal the ultimate martial arts techniques. Weapons that can be gained along the way include a ball and chain, hand grenade, steel ball, knife, crate, log, and shovel.

For more information, or distributor referral, write either American Technos, Inc., 10080 N. Wolfe Road, Suite 372, Cupertino, CA 95014; (408) 996-1877 or Romstar, Inc., 22857 Lockness Ave., Torrance, CA 90501; (213) 539-2744. ☐

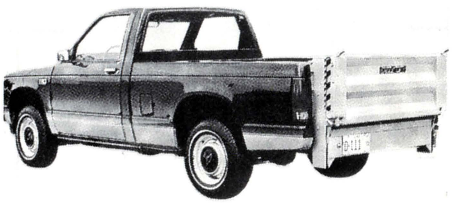

DOUBLE DRAGON II
The Revenge
AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY FROM AMERICAN TECHNOS AND ROMSTAR INC.
AMERICAN TECHNOS INC.

Hydraulic liftgates

Eagle Lift manufactures hydraulic liftgates for pickup, light-and medium-duty trucks. The company offers 16 different models for the varied needs of the truck operator, but each comes with many standard features.

Some of these features include an audible safety alarm that's activated whenever the liftgate is being raised; aircraft industry-grade galvanized lift cables; 1,000-pound capacity; heavy-duty electric hydraulic pump with a built-in relief valve to prevent overload; a platform that easily drops away for dock loading; a quick-release safety lock that keeps the gate secured in a stored position; and many more.

For the name of an Eagle Lift distributor in your area, contact Dan Barry or Jerry Mathison at (800) USA-GATE or (712) 322-1111.



Bill acceptor

Rowe International has introduced some new features on its OBA and CBA bill acceptors. The two new models have the versatility and options to serve any application, including video games and vending machines.

The OBAs are available in two models, OBA-2 and OBA-4. The former accepts $1 and $5 bills; the latter takes $1, $5, $10 and $20 bills. Each has options of variable credit pulses and single or multiple vend lines. The OBA-2 has stackers for 100, 200, 300, 500 or 1,000 bills, while the OBA-4 can accommodate 500 or 1,000 bills.

The CBA-2 is Rowe's most compact bill acceptor, combining bill transport, control circuitry, and stacker in one small package. The user-friendly entrance accepts $1 and $5 bills, passing them along five test stations for maximum security and a near 100 percent acceptance rate. It can be used in single or multiple price vending machines and can interface directly to a coin changer or to the machine itself.

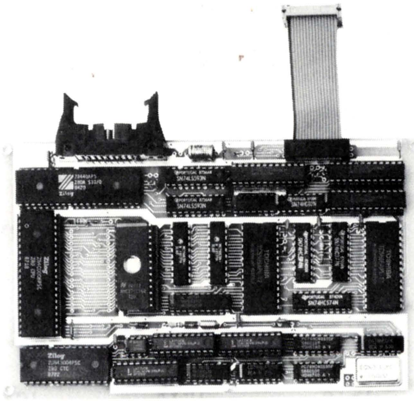
For more information, or distributor referral, write Rowe International, 75 Troy Hills Rd., Whippany, NJ 07981.

Controller card

Densitron Corp., manufacturer of liquid crystal display modules, has introduced the RS232 controller card for large graphic LCD. The SPX20 Series controller provides interfaces for keyboards and printers and supports a wide range of standard terminal emulations.

Highlighted features include a simple interface to 400 x 600 LCD, two full duplex RS232 serial ports, a unique keyboard port that allows for use of different keyboards, an easy-to-use "set-up menu," and a built-in line monitor for easy software debugging.

For more information, write Gordon Gibson, Product Manager, Densitron Corp., 2540 W. 237th St., Torrance, CA 90505; (213) 520-3530.



Free tool catalog

Jensen Tools is offering its new catalog free of charge. Illustrated in full color, it features new service and maintenance kits, as well as a broad range of tools and test equipment for electronic and electro-mechanical maintenance.

Also included are hand and power tools in inch and metric sizes, tool kits and cases, work holding devices, lighting and optical aids, new products for wire and cable service, electrical safety products, soldering supplies, and more. Many items are available only from Jensen.

For a free copy, write Jensen Tools Inc., 7815 S. 46th St., Phoenix, AZ 85044; (602) 968-6231.

JENSEN
1988 Winter Catalog
Guaranteed For Life!
We Back Them Better Because We Know They're Better!

Ranger top caps

GEM TOP Mfg. has been chosen the cap manufacturer to supply Ford Motor Co. with Ranger caps. These original equipment caps were designed specifically for the Ranger by Ford Design Center and GEM TOP. The cap is formed of durable polymers that withstand heat and stress, yet it weighs 35 to 50 percent less than fiberglass caps.

The price of the Ranger cap includes a clear sliding front window, curved sliding side windows with screens and dark-tinted glass for privacy, window latches and rear door locks for security, and a 12-volt interior dome light. Extra large rear doors allow easy loading or unloading.

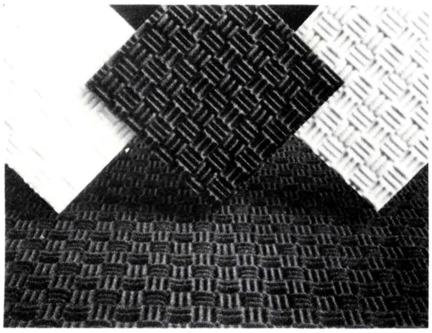
Ranger caps can be purchased directly from a Ford dealership when buying a Ranger truck, or by calling GEM TOP, (800) 547-9706 or (800) 251-4214.

Acoustical materials

Illbruck, makers of Sonex, have introduced MiniSonex and MiniSonex 1, two acoustical materials that help OEM manufacturers and other users cut noise within and around equipment. Both products share the same miniaturized version of Sonex's patented anechoic wedge shape.

The two are different, however. MiniSonex has a base of open-celled urethane foam, while MiniSonex 1 utilizes a revolutionary melamine resin base material that's highly flame resistant and acoustically effective. Studies have shown both to be effective at killing noise between 250 Hz and 400 Hz, especially where tight space restrictions are present.

For more information, write Illbruck, 3800 Washington Ave. North, Minneapolis, MN 55412; (612) 521-3555.



Polymer system

Master Bond, Inc.'s newly-developed, two-component Polymer System EP21AR features high chemical resistance, even to high-strength acids, bases, fuels, and most solvents. Utilizing a specially-synthesized epoxy polymer, it offers long-term protection to both metallic and non-metallic substrates.

The polymer system is proving to be a cost-effective alternative in many applications. It is available in quarts, gallons, five-gallon pails, and drums.

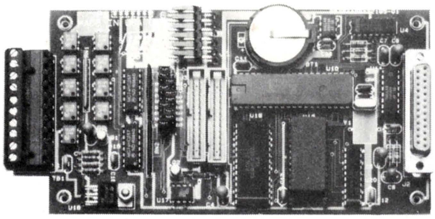
For more information, write James Brenner, Marketing Manager, Master Bond Inc., 154 Hobart St., Hackensack, NJ 07601; (201) 343-8983.

Data converter

The industrial products division of IEE, manufacturers of electronic displays and keyboards, announces a new addition to its family of data converter modules. The Relay Data Converter Module with Memory stores and "plays back" previously programmed "canned messages," using IEE Flip or Argus Aim display modules as output devices.

The unit can store up to 127 messages in its 8k bytes of CMOS RAM, which is backed-up by an on-board lithium battery. It is designed to be driven by either open collector NPN transistors or relay contacts connected to the unit's input terminal strip. Several input options are programmable.

For more information, write IPD Sales, IEE, 7740 Lemona Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91409-9234; (818) 787-0311, ext. 418.

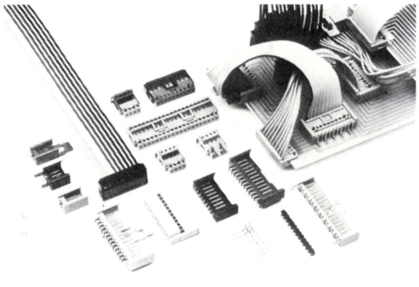


One-step connectors

The Stocko Electro Division of Alpha Products, Inc. has introduced a new line of connector products entitled "one-step connectors." They are available for terminating to discrete wire or flat-ribbon cable with .100 inch pitch. Alpha's termination process eliminates the need for stripping, crimping, notching, or poking individual contacts into the connector housing. Instead, a one-step termination process is offered, which can terminate up to 20 circuits with one action.

For customers with high-volume usage, such as videos and electronic games, Alpha offers a complete range of terminating equipment. A new catalog showing the full range of one-step connectors is available (Catalog No. AP-120).

For more information, write Alpha Products, 5740 Corsa Ave. #104, Westlake Village, CA 91362; (818) 889-9304.



Maintenance kit

Contact East offers a compact PC and Peripherals Maintenance Kit with a selection of tools for modifying and repairing personal computers, terminals, printers, and the cables that link them together.

Included is a combination wire cutter, stripper, and crimper for common RS-232 U-barrel connector pins. Also included are memory chip and RS-232 pin inserter/extractors and miniature wrenches that can fit between cable connectors and equipment housings to hold loose connector mounts.

The black Cordura case closes to 10-inches by eight-inches by two-inches. Optional accessories are a three-and-a-half digit meter for checking power and signal voltages as well as cables and a modular plug tool that cuts, strips, and crimps telephone wire to two, four, and six conductor RJ-11 connectors with the smaller four by four handset plugs.

The company also offers a Computer and Peripherals Service Kit with a complete assortment of tools for servicing computer systems, personal computers, terminals, and printers. It contains smaller size nutdrivers, hexdrivers, and wrenches plus a duplex outlet tester, and other equipment.

For more information, write Contact East, 335 Willow St. South, P.O. Box 786, No. Andover, MA 01845; (617) 682-2000. □

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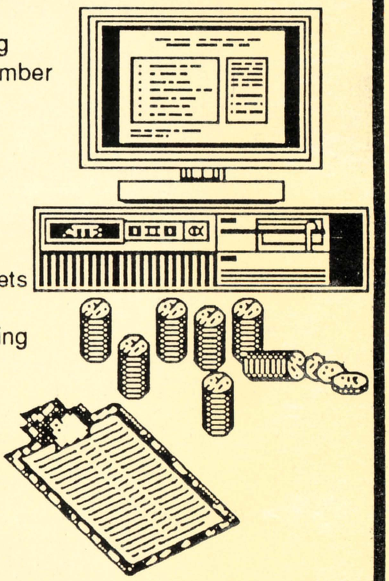

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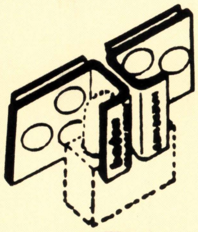

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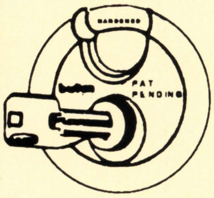

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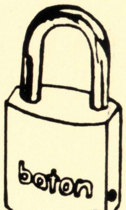

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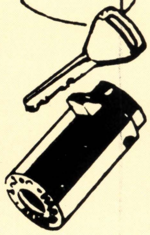

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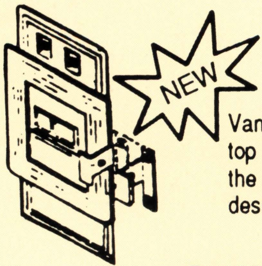

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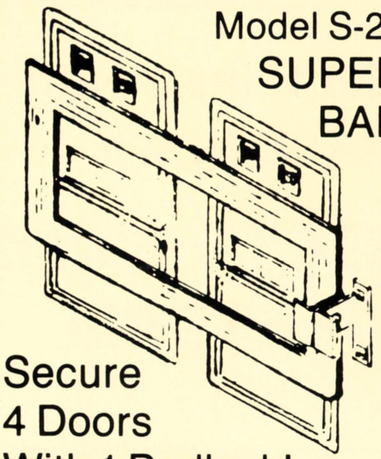

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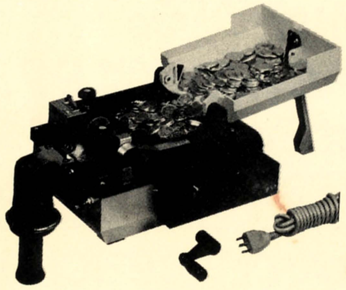

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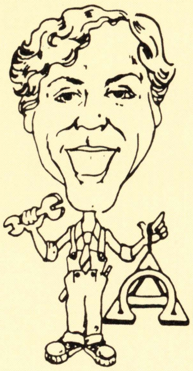

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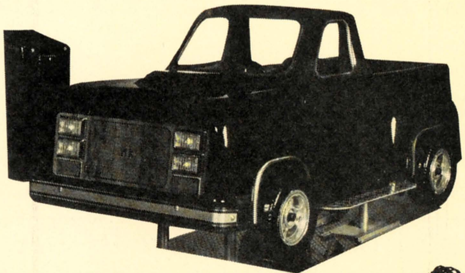

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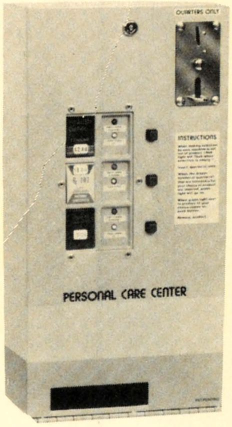

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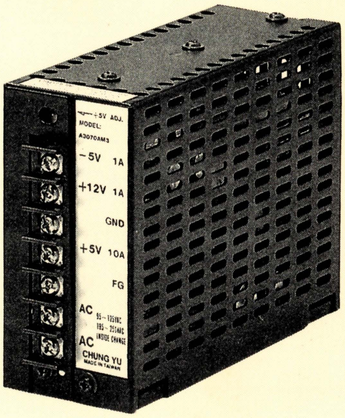
FLYBACK
IRON

7 A

10A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+12V 1A
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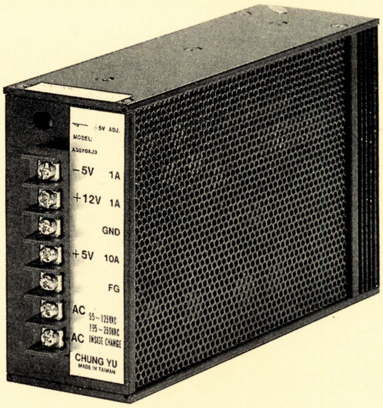
FLYBACK
ALUMINUM

7A

10A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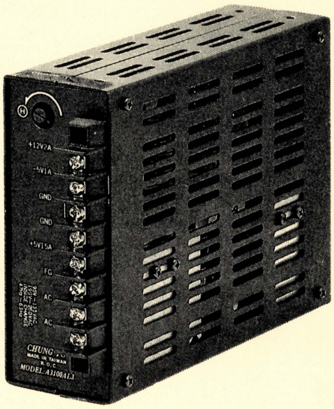
15A

18A


+12V2A
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GND
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+5V15A
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MODEL A3100AL3

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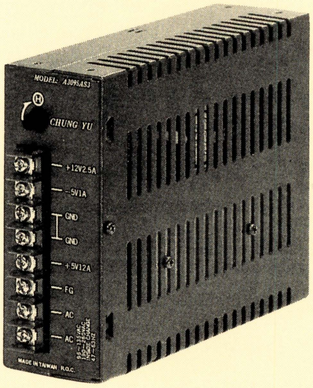
PWM
ALUMINUM

12A

15A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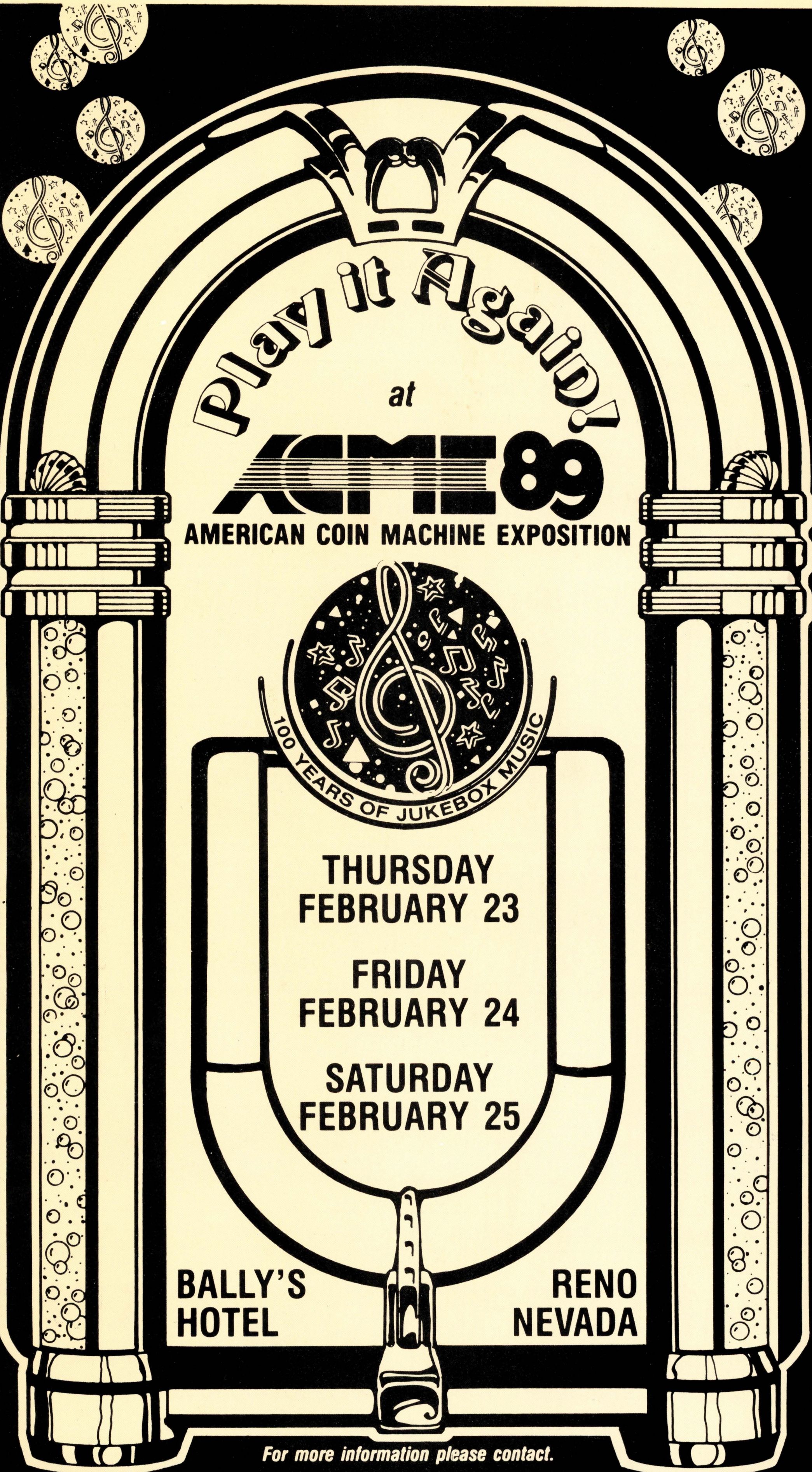

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THE CALENDAR

1989

JANUARY 7 8 9 10
Winter Consumer Electronics Show, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. Call (202) 457-8700.

JANUARY 15 16 17
Nightclub, Bar, and Restaurant Expo, Georgia International Convention Center, Atlanta, GA. Contact Angela Benvenutti (601) 236-5510.

JANUARY 18 19 20
National Association of Pizza Operators annual show, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. Contact Theresa Acles Cole (812) 937-4464.

JANUARY 26 27 28 29
Florida Amusement/Vending Association (FAVA) Vending Show, Omni Expo Center, Orlando, FL. Contact Kathey Fanning (904) 878-3134.

FEBRUARY 23 24 25
American Coin Machine Expo (ACME), sponsored by Play Meter and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA), Bally's Reno, Reno, NV. Contact W.T. Glasgow (312) 333-9292.

MARCH 2 3 4
South Carolina Coin Operators Association Annual Convention and Trade Show, Sheraton Hotel, Columbia, SC. Contact Helen Sikes (803) 779-2498 or 345-2048.

INTERNATIONAL

1989

DECEMBER 13 14 15
VAN-EXPO, Dutch amusement exhibition, RIA Building, Amsterdam. Call 4192 19156.

1989

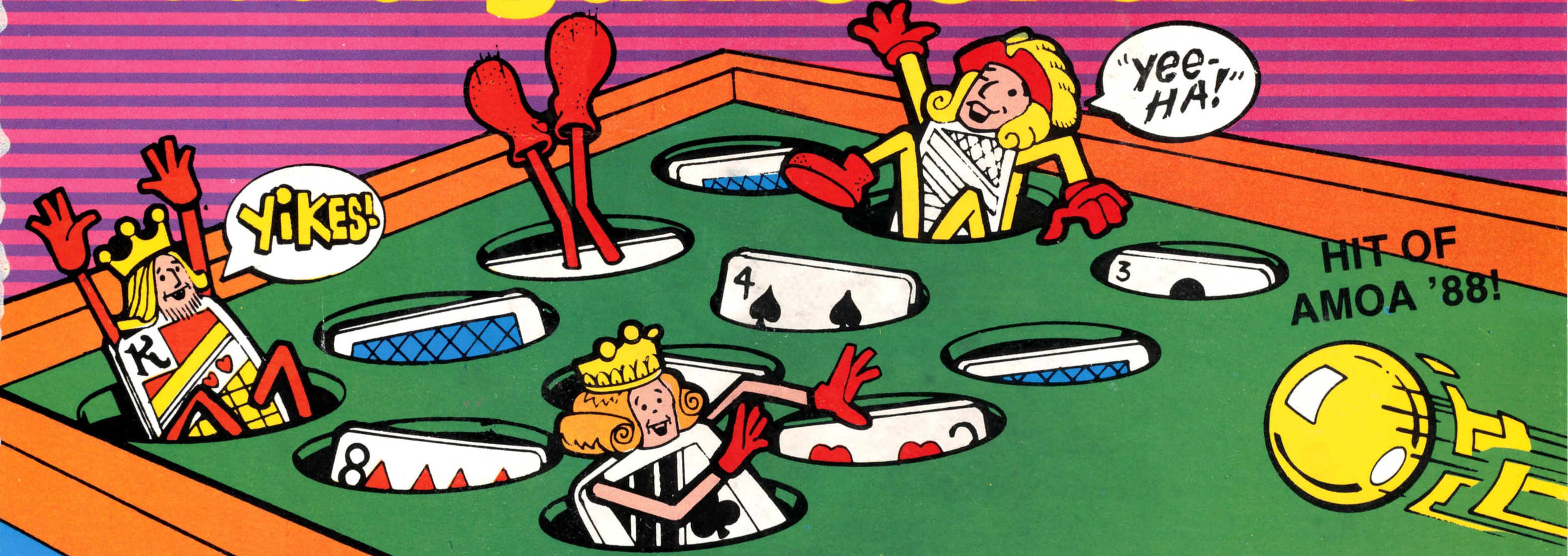
JANUARY 16 17 18 19
ATEI, Amusement Trade Exhibitions Ltd., Olympia, London, England. Call 01 228 4017.

JANUARY 25 26 27 28
IMA, German amusement exhibition, Messegelande, Frankfurt, West Germany. Contact Heckmann GmbH 06121 58 04 0.

FEBRUARY 23 24 25
Blackpool Amusement Exhibition, Winter Gardens, Blackpool, England. Call 0253 25252.

POKER ROLL

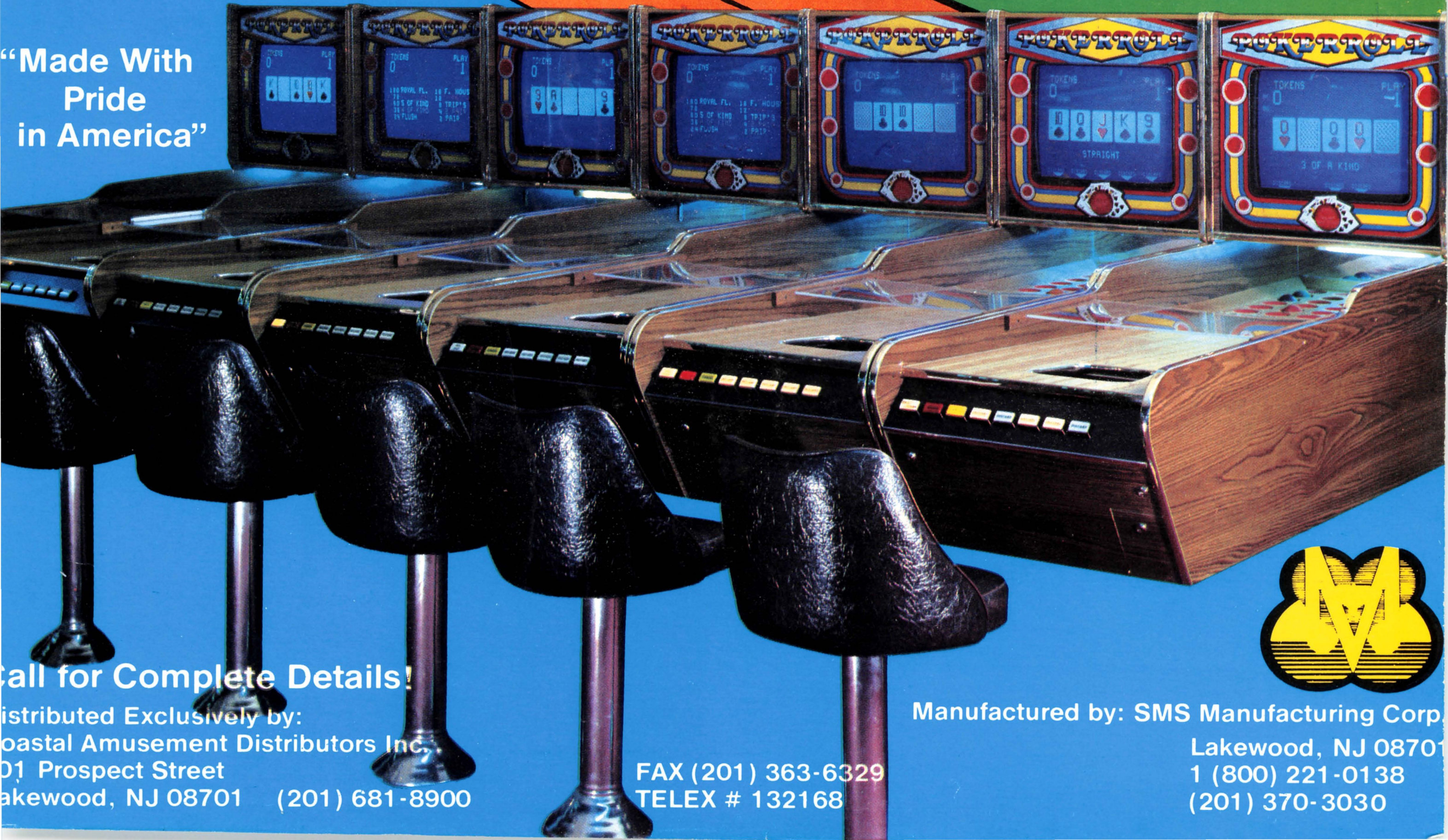
. . . a game of skill!


YIKES!
"Yee-HA!"
HIT OF AMOA '88!

Player rolls five rubber balls ... then selectively discards unwanted balls ... and rolls again to improve hand!

High Earnings Through Repeat Play!

Fun For ALL Ages! A True Skill Game!



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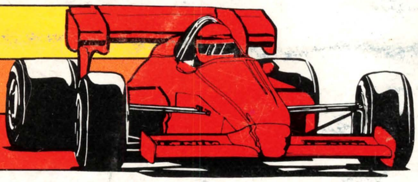
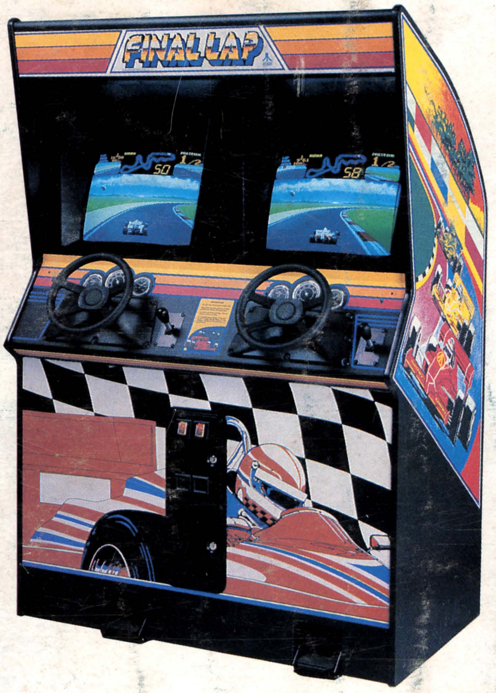
THE ULTIMATE RACING CHALLENGE CONTINUES!



Final Lap: Now available in an upright cabinet!

- As many as four units, uprights and/or sitdowns, can be linked together: eight players can compete head-to-head!
- To begin a head-to-head race, players deposit coins at the same time.
- New players can start a game even if another race is in progress.
- One player competes against the clock or multiple players race at the same time.

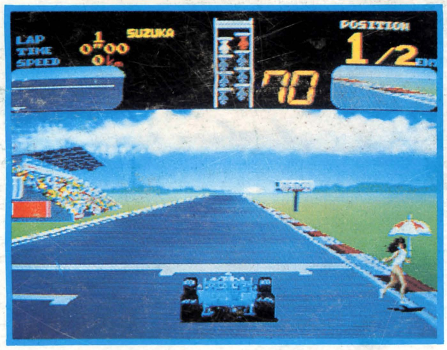


- Each player has his own realistic first-person view of the track and sees the cars of his competitors on his screen.
- Record-setting earnings in Japan, Europe and the United States.

Realistic controls:

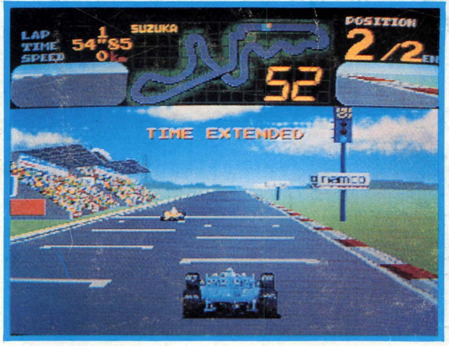
- Steering wheel with return-to-center steering
- Hi/low shifter
- Accelerator pedal

ATARI
GAMES

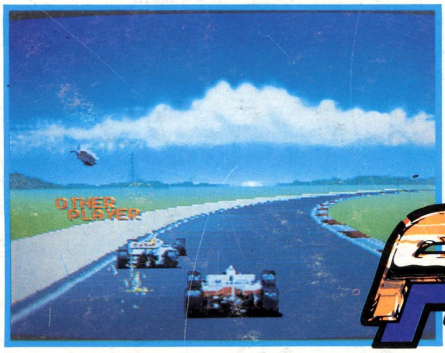


The race is on!

Height: 72 3/8 in., 184 cm.
Width: 49 in., 124.5 cm.
Depth: 33 in., 84 cm.
Weight: 450 lbs., 204.5 Kg.



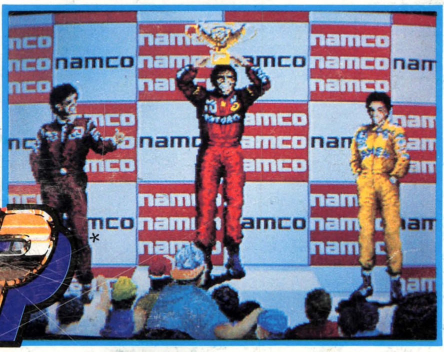
If one player finishes the lap, all players get extended time.



Race against another player's car.

Add Final Lap upright to your location and join Atari in the winners' circle!

FINAL LAP*



Set the best lap time and go to the winners' circle.

*Final Lap is engineered and designed by Namco Ltd. Manufactured by Atari Games. Trademark and © 1987 Namco.

Atari Games Corporation, 675 Sycamore Drive, P.O. Box 361110, Milpitas, CA 95035-1110 (408) 434 3700